

This electronic thesis or dissertation has been downloaded from the King's Research Portal at <https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/>



Article of Faith?

An empirical study of the tract Journey Into Life in the development of British Evangelical Identity between 1963 and 1989.

Noble, Christopher John

Awarding institution:
King's College London

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author and no quotation from it or information derived from it may be published without proper acknowledgement.

END USER LICENCE AGREEMENT



Unless another licence is stated on the immediately following page this work is licensed

under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International

licence. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

You are free to copy, distribute and transmit the work

Under the following conditions:

- Attribution: You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work).
- Non Commercial: You may not use this work for commercial purposes.
- No Derivative Works - You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

Any of these conditions can be waived if you receive permission from the author. Your fair dealings and other rights are in no way affected by the above.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact librarypure@kcl.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Article of Faith?

An empirical study of the tract *Journey Into Life* in the
development of British Evangelical Identity between
1963 and 1989

Christopher John Lancelot Noble

A Thesis Submitted for PhD. Examination

Department of Theology and Religious Studies

Kings College London

Abstract

This empirical research into the iconic evangelical artefact and object of faith in the form of the tract *Journey Into Life* offers a new angle of perception in the study of late twentieth-century evangelicalism in the United Kingdom between 1963 and 1989. As part of the ethnographic turn in contemporary ecclesiology, this research employs a material culture research methodology that provides a distinctive new gaze upon the formation of British evangelical identity. This study engages in depth with the everyday theology and practice of evangelism by focussing on the signifying practice of tract usage amongst evangelical Christians. A significant theological disclosure was identified as taking place within the details of practice and belief that surrounded the gifting of the tract *Journey Into Life*, a small booklet that dominated the Christian book market for over three decades. This research subjected the iconic road sign tract and signature artefact of the British evangelical movement to critical analysis in a threefold strategy that employed the tools of material culture gift exchange theory, the discipline of contemporary practical theology, and the techniques of qualitative social research. The findings of this study offer a unique and fresh insight into the lived and embodied faith of evangelicals, demonstrating the way in which the exchange of this humble evangelical article of faith played a previously unrecognised but significant role in the construction and development of an influential evangelical identity in the United Kingdom. The research concluded with its findings being offered for innovative engagement with contemporary evangelical communication through the development of digital media for evangelism in the rapidly changing social context of Britain today.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	10
CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION	11
Introducing <i>Journey Into Life</i>	11
Lifting the Evangelical Label	12
Evangelical Resistance and Resilience	15
Objects of Power	16
Purpose of this Research	17
Description of The Tract <i>Journey Into Life</i>	18
Falsifying Common Answers	19
Problematizing the Journey	20
The Christian Answer	24
Christ Knocking at the Door	25
The Prayer of Commitment	27
Final Suggestions	28
Reflexivity	29
Researcher Bias	29
Growing-Up Evangelical	31
<i>My Journey Into Life</i> Narrative	32
CHAPTER TWO - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	33
Research Design	33
Epistemology	34
Research Ethics	35
Case Study Method	36
Advantages and Disadvantages	36
Case Study Sampling Criteria	38
Material Culture Theory	39
Artefact and Object	39
Gift Exchange Theory	41
Theological Reflection	42
Theology as a way of seeing	42
Theological Observation	42
Practical Theology and Ordinary Theological Reflection	43
Theological Voices	44
Social Location and Theological Reflection	45
Theological Discourse Analysis	46
Theological Mapping	47

Qualitative Research Interviews	47
A Narrative Method	48
A Critical Approach to Interviews	49
Creative Interviews	50
Semi-Structured Interviews	51
The Pilot Interview	52
Pre-Interview and Post-Interview Reflection	52
The Dynamics of Informed Consent	53
Interviewee Control	53
Post-Interview Notes and Transcription	54
Geographical Limits	55
Data Analysis Methods	56
Coding and Categorical Analysis	57
Hermeneutical Tensions	57
A Biographical Interpretative Method	58
Data Reduction Strategy	58
Summary of Research Methodology	59
 CHAPTER THREE - RESEARCH INTERVIEW DATA	 61
Twelve Narratives of Encounter	61
Narrative One – Wells: ‘The whole gospel was sequenced’.	61
Narrative Two – Kerr: ‘It enabled me to make that decision’.	62
Narrative Three – Chester: ‘But it’s still the Gospel, isn’t it?’	64
Narrative Four – Hurst: ‘It has a really strong sense of authority’.	65
Narrative Five – Wood: ‘My epiphany came through this’.	68
Narrative Six – May: ‘The basis of my Christian belief’.	70
Narrative Seven – Ford: ‘Keep this on the table’.	71
Narrative Eight – King: ‘I recognise it immediately’.	72
Narrative Nine – Clements: ‘It still remains an important part of me’.	73
Narrative Ten – Dench: ‘a catalyst in my faith decision’.	74
Narrative Eleven– Herne: ‘simple and easy to understand’.	75
Narrative Twelve – Brown: ‘It’s all utter bollocks’.	76
Five Emergent Themes	78
Theme One: Given it	78
Theme Two: Reading it	79
Theme Three: Praying it	79
Theme Four: Holding onto it	79
Theme Five: Handing it on	80
Summary	80
 CHAPTER FOUR – <i>JOURNEY INTO LIFE</i> ABOARD THE EVANGELICAL ARGO	 81
The Gift	81
Evangelical ‘Kula’	82
Evangelical ‘Argonauts’	83
The Evangelical ‘Argo’	84
Communication Crisis	85
Paradoxical and Pervasive Simplicity	86
The Evangelical Camp	87

The Obligation to Partake	87
The Young Persons Fellowship	90
Relational Exchange in the Young Person's Fellowship	90
Ceremonies of Transfer in Popular Music	91
The University Christian Union	92
The Evangelical Church	93
Frontline Evangelism	93
<i>Journey Into Life</i> as a gift from the Church	95
Implications of the Disruptive Gifting Narrative	97
The Great Motivation of the Evangelical 'Argo'	99
Powerful Motivational Beliefs	99
Voices of Myth and Theology	100
 CHAPTER FIVE - WRAPPING AND UNWRAPPING <i>JOURNEY INTO LIFE</i>	 102
Reading the Artefact	102
Reading the Wrapper	103
The Decision to Pick Up and Read	103
The Wrapping for The Journey	104
A Pictorial Guide to the Christian Life	105
Communication in its Own Right	106
Unwrapping the Gift	107
Divisive Questions	108
Working-Class Ecclesiology and Culture	109
Subversive Simplicity and Certainty	110
The Tabloid Tract	111
Visual Culture with Pictures and Captions in Print	112
Making Sense of the Cloud	113
Permeating Pictures	114
Conceptualising Faith Through Words	115
Doctrine Articulated on the Page for the First Time	116
Unwrapped but Unwanted	117
Reactionary Reader Response	118
The Inappropriate Gift	119
The Indelible Gift	120
The Gift of Time	121
 CHAPTER SIX - THE SPIRIT OF THE GIFT OF <i>JOURNEY INTO LIFE</i>	 123
Spiritual Gifts	123
Opening the Door to Jesus	124
Jesus at the Door	124
Jesus Comes In	125
Praying the Prayer	127
Struggle, Resistance and Procrastination	127
Thoughtful Decisions for Christ	129
Alone in a Quiet Place	131

Saying the Prayer	131
The Prayer with Immediate Results	132
The Prayer with Thoughtful Responses	133
Receiving the Spirit of The Gift	135
Varieties of Religious Experience	135
Cognitive Convictions	137
A Gift in Time	139
Acute Spiritual Experiences	140
 CHAPTER SEVEN - SOUVENIR, RELIC AND ICON OF EVANGELICAL FAITH	 143
Keeping Faith	143
 <i>Journey Into Life as an Evangelical Souvenir</i>	 144
A Place Once Visited	144
Imaginative Reconstructions of the Past	145
The Souvenir in Constructing and Organizing Memory	146
The Souvenir in Homiletic Structures and Segments	147
Shaping the Evangelical Memory	148
 <i>Journey Into Life as an Evangelical Relic</i>	 149
Holding onto the Relics of Evangelical Faith	149
Evangelical Protestant Relics	150
Portable Relics of Evangelical Faith	151
Reliquiae or Relinquere	152
Postmodern Tensions	154
Ecclesiastical Tensions	154
Academic Tensions	156
 <i>Journey Into Life as an Evangelical Icon</i>	 157
Iconic Practices of Belief	157
Iconography Aboard the Evangelical Argo	158
Iconic Practices of Belief Aboard the Evangelical Argo	159
Iconoclasm Aboard the Argo	160
The Noetic Vacuum	161
Visual Strategies and the Hegemony of The Word	162
Evangelical Icon	162
 CHAPTER EIGHT - HANDING ON THE GIFT OF <i>JOURNEY INTO LIFE</i>	 164
Handing it on	164
 Levels of Obligation	 164
The Obligation to Give	164
Spontaneous Dynamic Sharing of <i>Journey into Life</i>	165
Consistently Sharing the <i>Journey Into Life</i>	168
Diverse Practices of Sharing the <i>Journey Into Life</i>	169
 Degrees of Liminality	 170
Evangelical Liminality	170
A Liminal Space	170
The Erosion of The Evangelical Idea	172
 Diversity of Expression	 173

Employed in the Business of Faith	174
A Theological Catalyst	175
Enabling Evangelists	176
Vicars and Tracts	177
Camp Fires and Festivals	180
Something in Their Hands	180
Broken Bodies of Christ	181
 CHAPTER NINE – MAPPING THE THEOLOGY OF <i>JOURNEY INTO LIFE</i>	 184
The Theological Landscape of <i>Journey Into Life</i>	184
Theological Triangulation Points	184
Normative Evangelical Theology	185
Heuristic Model	187
 The Voices of Evangelical Soteriology	 188
Evangelical Soteriology	188
Evangelical Soteriology in Practice	189
Propitiation, Expiation and Exclusion	191
 The Voices of Evangelical Pneumatology	 193
Locating Evangelical Pneumatology	193
Union with Christ in Evangelical Theology	195
Inferential or Immediate Assurance in <i>Journey Into Life</i>	197
 Evangelical Ecclesiology	 199
Evangelical Missionary Ecclesiology	199
Uncomfortable Commissions	200
The Visible Evangelical Church	201
Ecclesial Identity	202
 The Theological Trialectic of <i>Journey Into Life</i>	 203
 CHAPTER TEN – THE LEGACY OF <i>JOURNEY INTO LIFE</i>	 205
Three Contemporary Trends	206
 The Legacy of <i>Journey Into Life</i> in Evangelistic Courses	 207
The Alpha Course and The Legacy of <i>Journey Into Life</i>	207
Praying the Prayer on Alpha	209
Immediate and Inferential Assurance in Alpha	209
The Emmaus Journey into Faith	210
Christianity Explored	212
 The Legacy of <i>Journey Into Life</i> in Fresh Expressions of Church	 213
Beyond the Fringe	213
<i>Journey Into Life</i> and The Messy Church	215
More Christology	216
 The Legacy of <i>Journey Into Life</i> in Treasure Hunting Evangelism	 217
Supernatural Evangelism	217
Treasure Hunting Through the Lens of <i>Journey Into Life</i>	219
Sequencing, Healing and Prophetic Prayer	221
The Gift of Evangelism	223
 CHAPTER ELEVEN – RESEARCH FINDINGS	 225

Encapsulated Elements	225
Eight Essential Elements of <i>Journey Into life</i>	225
1. Iconographic	225
2. Simple	227
3. Visual	228
4. Relational	230
5. Soteriological	232
6. Christocentric	233
7. Decisional	235
8. Motivational	236
Summary	238
 CHAPTER TWELVE – CONCLUSION: THE GIFT OF <i>JOURNEY INTO LIFE</i>	 239
Gift and Grace in <i>Journey Into Life</i>	239
The Gift	239
Gift and Grace	240
Perfections of Grace in <i>Journey Into Life</i>	241
A Practical Theology of Grace in <i>Journey Into Life</i>	243
 Four Elements in the Mediation of Grace through <i>Journey Into Life</i>	 244
Evangelical Simplicity	244
Evangelical Iconography	249
Evangelical Soteriology	253
Evangelical Decision	256
 <i>Journey Into Life</i> and The Future of Printed Tracts in a Digital Age.	 257
The Future for <i>Journey Into Life</i>	257
Evangelical Innovation and the Digital Age	259
Digital Evangelism	260
The Digital Tract	261
Back to The Gift	262
 APPENDIX 1.	 264
Detailed breakdown of the process of collation of emergent categories into the five major research themes:	264
Chester	264
Wells	264
Kerr	265
Hurst	265
Wood	266
May	266
Ford	267
King	267
Clements	268
Dench	268
Brown	269
Herne	270
 APPENDIX 2	 271
Collation of Categorical data for further Thematic Analysis	271
Categorical data collated under the theme ‘Given it’	271
Categorical data collated under the theme ‘Reading it’	271

Categorical data collated under the theme 'Praying it'	272
Categorical data collated under the theme 'Holding onto it'	272
Categorical data collated under the theme 'Handing it on'	272
APPENDIX 3	273
Narrative One – Wells: 'The whole gospel was sequenced'.	273
Codes:	273
Categories: (underlined)	273
Narrative Two – Kerr: 'It enabled me to make that decision'.	273
Codes:	273
Categories:	274
Narrative Three – Chester: 'But it's still the Gospel, isn't it?'	274
Codes:	274
Categories:	274
Narrative Four – Hurst: 'It has a really strong sense of authority'.	274
Codes:	274
Categories:	275
Narrative Five – Wood: 'My epiphany came through this'.	275
Codes:	275
Categories:	275
Narrative Six – May: 'The basis of my Christian belief'.	276
Codes:	276
Categories:	276
Narrative Seven – Ford: 'Keep this on the table'.	276
Codes:	276
Categories:	277
Narrative Eight – King: 'I recognise it immediately'.	277
Codes:	277
Categories:	278
Narrative Nine – Clements: 'It still remains an important part of me'.	278
Codes:	278
Categories:	278
Narrative Ten – Dench: 'a catalyst in my faith decision'.	279
Codes:	279
Categories:	279
Narrative Eleven – Herne: 'simple and easy to understand'.	280
Codes:	280
Categories:	280
Narrative Twelve – Brown: 'It's all utter bollocks'.	280
Codes:	280
Categories:	281
INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM	282
BIBLIOGRAPHY	285

Acknowledgements

The writing of this thesis has been enabled through the encouragement, support and help of a great number of people. It is not possible to name everyone who has contributed, so I would like to thank all those who have at some point, even without knowing it, helped me to get this thesis out. This particularly applies to my willing and helpful anonymous interviewees without whom there would be no data.

I would like to thank the author Norman Warren for his enthusiastic and generous support in giving me the story of *Journey Into Life*. Thanks to Professors Alister McGrath and Pete Ward who encouraged and inspired me to take on the challenge of a Research Degree, and the Kings College London Department of Theology and Religious Studies for their warm hospitality, especially through the encouragement and wisdom of my supervisors Professor Paul Joyce and Dr James Harding.

The following people have helped me considerably: Steve Chalke, Celia Cockburn, Chris Dench, Timothy Dudley-Smith, Paul Fiddes, Trevor Gerhardt, John Goodsell, Kenneth Habbershon, Richard Herkes, J. John, Dave Johnston, Christine Julier, Maureen King, Dai Lewis, Steve Lillicrap, Dick Lucas, Mother Mary-David and the sisters at West Mallory Abbey, Tim Mills, Michael Perry, Arthur Robinson, Chris Russell, Roger Simpson, Graham Tomlin and Trevor Whiffin.

Thanks to my wife Deborah who has had to suffer the birth pains not only of our children but this thesis and finally thanks to my cocker spaniel Millie who had the good sense to drag me away from my desk for a walk at just the right time.

Road signs cover picture used with permission copyright CPAS, www.cpas.org.uk. Illustrations used with permission of the illustrator Elizabeth Marsh.

Chapter One - Introduction

Introducing *Journey Into Life*

This empirical research into an iconic evangelical artefact and object of faith in the form of the tract *Journey Into Life* has been designed to offer a new way of seeing and a new angle of perception in the study of late twentieth-century evangelicalism in the United Kingdom between 1963 and 1989.¹ As part of the ‘ethnographic turn’ in contemporary ecclesiology,² this research employs a material culture research methodology that offers a very different and distinctive new gaze upon the formation of British evangelical identity. What this research seeks to do is to engage in depth with the everyday theology and practice of evangelism by evangelical Christians. It does this by focussing on the ‘signifying practice’³ of tract usage that is common to the broad spectrum of Christian groups who would identify themselves as evangelical. It has been the conviction of this research that a significant theological disclosure is taking place within the details of practice and belief⁴ that surround the gifting of evangelical tracts, most notably *Journey Into Life*, that dominated the domestic tract market for over three decades.⁵ This research subjects the iconic road sign tract and

¹ The *terminus a quo* in 1963 and the *terminus ad quem* in 1989 reflect the period of the tracts major sales. The focus of the study is on this specific epoch in British evangelical history in the three decades from 1960 prior to the plateau in evangelical growth in the 1990s as identified in Rob Warner, *Reinventing English Evangelicalism 1966-2001: A Theological and Sociological Study* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007), p. 34.

² Christian Scharen and Aana Marie Vigen, in *Ethnography as Christian Theology and Ethics* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011), pp. xvii-xxvii. Describes the ethnographic turn as ‘a critical mass of scholars [that] finds ethnography integral to their endeavors’ resulting in a ‘methodological shift’.

³ Specific social practices appropriated into a culture that signify meaning. Paul Du Gay, et al., *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman* (London: Sage Publications, 1997).

⁴ Michael Mazur and Kate McCarthy, *God in the Details: American Religion in Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

⁵ With sales of more than 30,000,000 copies in the United Kingdom. ‘It’s the best-selling thing we ever had’. Richard Herkes, ‘Publisher Interview’, ed. by Christopher Noble (2012), (p. 8).

signature artefact of the British evangelical movement⁶ to a thorough critical analysis in a threefold strategy that employs the material culture tools of gift exchange theory, the discipline of contemporary practical theology, and the techniques of qualitative social research. The findings of this study offer a unique and fresh insight into the lived and embodied faith of evangelicals, demonstrating the way in which the exchange of this humble evangelical article of faith played a previously unrecognised but significant role in the construction and development of a unique and influential evangelical identity in the United Kingdom.⁷

Lifting the Evangelical Label

Through the detailed examination of the gift exchange processes developed by the evangelical 'Argo'⁸ in its evangelism through *Journey Into Life* this research exposes a fascinating, intriguing and enigmatic subculture of late twentieth-century Britain.⁹ Theoretically situated within Bebbington's comprehensive historical and phenomenological 'quadrilateral of priorities', *Journey Into Life* exemplifies Bebbington's evangelical paradigm of *conversionism, activism, biblicism* and *crucicentrism*.¹⁰ Bebbington's overarching thesis continues to provide an incisive framework for evangelical ecclesiology, whilst at the same time leaving a significant amount of room for further and more specific interdisciplinary research. This case study of *Journey Into Life* moves within the interstice in Bebbington's thesis to uncover more of the particular, highly

⁶ Whilst recognising the difference between the terms United Kingdom and Britain, for the purposes of this research these terms are used interchangeably in line with popular usage.

⁷ Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 2. 'Material culture specialists derive meanings from objects themselves by paying attention to the form, distribution, function, and changing character of the objects and their environment'.

⁸ The term the 'Argo' was developed for this research to describe the twentieth-century British conservative evangelical culture in the early 1960s to the end of the 1980s, that provided the context for the development and deployment of *Journey Into Life*. For full explanation see chapter four 'Journey Into Life aboard the evangelical 'Argo'.

⁹ Referred to in this research as the evangelical 'Argonauts' after Malinowski's ethnography of the gift exchanging Trobriand Islanders that he called 'the Argonauts of the Western Pacific'. For full explanation see chapter four 'Evangelical Argonauts'. See also Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (London: Routledge & Sons, 1922).

¹⁰ David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Abingdon: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

nuanced social and theological complexity that shelters under the umbrella of the evangelical label and brand.¹¹ The material culture methodology in this research provides a unique, powerful and penetrating tool of haptic perception in prising open the complex, discreet, unrecognised and largely unseen world of conservative evangelical Christianity in the United Kingdom. Analysis of the distinctive mechanisms of identification and subscription to the iconographic semiology of this religious artefact provide access into its religious identity, offering up for examination a world of meaning that might otherwise be unrecognised in other more traditional approaches to the study of these late twentieth-century British evangelicals and their practices of evangelism. The research of this tangible physical object creates an aperture, so that this distinctive evangelical identity in terms of its everyday beliefs, attitudes and actions can be made visible and available for discussion and critical evaluation. This research of *Journey Into Life* is important and significant as it offers a unique window and gaze into a religious community that is often misunderstood or misrepresented, particularly in what Taylor calls 'block thinking', that 'fuses a very varied reality into one indissoluble unity'.¹² This study challenges the false-perception of evangelicalism as a monolithic entity.¹³

Contemporary ecclesiology has over the last twenty years sought to engage with what Taylor describes as this 'very varied reality'¹⁴ in accessing British evangelical identity using different academic disciplines and different methodological approaches. Bebbington and Chapman have successfully brought their historical method to bear on contemporary evangelical ecclesiology.¹⁵ McGrath and Turnbull have continued to pursue a doctrinal approach,¹⁶

¹¹ Elaine Graham, *Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1996), pp. 9-11. Particularly as Graham has emphasised in the 'embodied' and 'lived' expressions of faith.

¹² Charles Taylor, 'What Is Secularism?', in *Secularism, Religion and Multicultural Citizenship* ed. by Geoffrey Braham Levey and Tariq Modood (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2009), p. xv. 'Block thinking fuses a very varied reality into one indissoluble unity'.

¹³ Particularly under the broad label of 'fundamentalism'.

¹⁴ Taylor, *Secularism, Religion and Multicultural Citizenship*, p. xv.

¹⁵ Alister Chapman, *Godly Ambition: John Stott and the Evangelical Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

¹⁶ Alister McGrath, *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1994). Richard Turnbull, *Anglican and Evangelical?* (London: Continuum, 2007).

augmented by Guest and Warner's synthesis of sociology and theology particularly but not exclusively through the medium of congregational studies.¹⁷ More recently the congregational sociological research of popular religion advocated by Lynch,¹⁸ has been applied specifically to this question of conservative evangelical identity in Strhan's analysis of a major conservative evangelical congregation in London.¹⁹ These congregational studies have been supplemented by in-depth research of particular aspects of evangelicalism, such as Ward's research into the influence of worship songs,²⁰ Heard's research of the Alpha Course²¹ and Ackerley's exploration of the importation of pragmatic American evangelicalism into the United Kingdom.²² Astley's ordinary theology has also made its mark, not least in how his approach has influenced Cartledge's study of British Pentecostalism and Christie's research in ordinary Christology,²³ as have popular works such as Barclay's emic accounts of post war conservative evangelicalism,²⁴ as well as the developing biographical material following the departure of evangelicalism's most influential twentieth-century leader, Dr John Stott.²⁵

¹⁷ Matthew Guest, *Evangelical Identity and Contemporary Culture: A Congregational Study in Innovation* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007). Warner, *Reinventing English Evangelicalism*.

¹⁸ Gordon Lynch, *Between Sacred and Profane: Researching Religion and Popular Culture* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2007); Gordon Lynch, *Understanding Theology and Popular Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).

¹⁹ Anna Strhan, *Aliens and Strangers?: The Struggle for Coherence in the Everyday Lives of Evangelicals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

²⁰ Pete Ward, *Selling Worship: How What We Sing Has Changed the Church* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2005).

²¹ James Heard, *Inside Alpha: Explorations in Evangelism* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2009).

²² Glyn J. Ackerley, *Importing Faith: The Effect of American "Word of Faith" Culture on Contemporary English Revivalism* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2015). These studies were built on the pioneering research methods developed by Dr. Andrew Walker as director of the centre for Theology, Religion and Culture at Kings College London. See Andrew Walker, *Restoring the Kingdom: The Radical Christianity of the House Church Movement* (Guilford: Eagle Publishing, 1998). Walker's influence is acknowledged by Warner, p. xvii.

²³ Jeff Astley, *Ordinary Theology: Looking, Listening and Learning in Theology* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002); Mark J. Cartledge, *Testimony in the Spirit: Rescripting Ordinary Pentecostal Theology* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010); Ann Christie, *Ordinary Christology* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012).

²⁴ Oliver R. Barclay, *Whatever Happened to the Jesus Lane Lot?* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977). Oliver R. Barclay, *Evangelicalism in Britain 1935-1995* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1997).

²⁵ Alister Chapman, 'Secularization and the Ministry of John Stott at All Souls Langham Place, in 1950-1970', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 56 (2005), 496-513; Timothy Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: A Global Ministry* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001).

Evangelical Resistance and Resilience

As Davie notes in her revised thesis the culture of 'believing without belonging'²⁶ and British 'vicarious religion' has been challenged by the growing presence of other faiths who dispute the secular notion of faith as a private matter to be proscribed by the state.²⁷ There has also been a surprising resilience²⁸ and resistance in evangelicalism particularly in charismatic congregations and 'cathedral type churches'²⁹ contributing to a wider religious movement in the United Kingdom that is expressing religious identity not only at the level of private belief, but also in the public space. Ellul argued that 'secularization is always an intermediate stage between a religious society on the way out and the appearance of a new religious structuring',³⁰ and this view has considerable merit in the context of the contemporary ecology of faith in the United Kingdom. Bruce's 'God is dead' rhetoric,³¹ with Brown's belief in the 'death of Christian Britain',³² and Jenkins post-modern apocalyptic prediction that 'the church faces death',³³ all need to be balanced with the growth of evangelical congregations and megachurches, most notably in larger cities and towns.³⁴ Congregational studies have contributed to our understanding of this evangelical resistance and conservative resurgence³⁵ in the context of overall national church decline, but what this particular study does is to go behind these congregations to look at one of the key mechanisms and processes of evangelical replication that has for over fifty years continued to supply evangelicalism with a stream of new people

²⁶ Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1994).

²⁷ Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain: A Persistent Paradox*, 2nd edn (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), p. 10.

²⁸ Warner, p. xvii. Described by Warner as a 'determined resilience'.

²⁹ Davie, *A Persistent Paradox*, p. 8.

³⁰ Jacques Ellul, *The New Demons* (New York: A Crossroad Book - The Seabury Press, 1973).

³¹ Bruce Steve, *God Is Dead: Secularization in the West, Religion in the Modern World* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002).

³² Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularization 1800-2000* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2001).

³³ Michael Jenkins, *The Church Faces Death: Ecclesiology in a Post-Modern Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

³⁴ Andrew Davies, Heather Buckingham, and Mark Cartledge, 'Megachurches and Social Engagement in London'. <www.birmingham.ac.uk/.../projects/megachurches/index.aspx> [Accessed 19th July 2017]

³⁵ Guest, *Evangelical Identity and Contemporary Culture*, pp. 221-217.

and leaders. This research is a response to Chapman's challenge for more work to be done in understanding evangelical ambition in the face of the secular narrative, stridently popularised in the 'God is dead' movement just two years after the publication of *Journey Into Life*.³⁶ Whilst the mechanisms of the evangelical 'Argo' may have looked naïve and laughably simplistic to a mid-sixties National church intoxicated by a dominant and triumphalist secularisation narrative,³⁷ this simple article and icon of faith was at work helping to develop a distinctive, popular and powerful evangelical 'Argo' with its own unique identity. It is this mechanism of resistance and resilience in the gifting and exchange of this simple evangelical artefact and object of faith that is the subject of this study.

Objects of Power

One of the key questions that precipitated this research was how could such a simple little booklet have exercised such an important and formative influence on evangelicals and their leaders?³⁸ As Brown's research revealed, tracts have a history as powerful tools in the 'salvation economy'³⁹ and behind the dissemination of religious ideas in that public space lie some deceptively simple and apparently insignificant ephemeral artefacts that date back even before the invention of printing, augmented today by an expanding montage of online media.⁴⁰ It is the contention of this thesis that *Journey Into Life* was a powerful artefact and piece of ephemeral literature that impacted a generation of mainly young people with thirty million copies of *Journey Into Life* being sold in the United Kingdom over three decades from 1963.⁴¹ The qualitative data presented

³⁶ Chapman, *Secularization*, p. 513.

³⁷ Davie tentatively takes the view that 'the secularisation discourses that emerged in the early 1960s originated not from secular sociology as is often assumed but from within British Christianity itself'. Davie, *A Persistent Paradox*, p. 32.

³⁸ This research question arose in discussion with Professor Pete Ward at Kings College London and through subsequent exploratory conversations with evangelicals. *Journey Into Life* was frequently named as the source of a decisional act of faith amongst the researchers contemporaries.

³⁹ Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*, pp. 35-57.

⁴⁰ David Hesmondhaigh, *The Cultural Industries*, 3rd edn (London: Sage, 2013); Robert Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England 1760-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁴¹ See footnote number one for explanation of the *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem*.

in this research offers a rich seam of evidence in support of the contention that this humble artefact of faith made a significant contribution to the construction, maintenance and ongoing development of evangelical identity in the United Kingdom.

Purpose of this Research

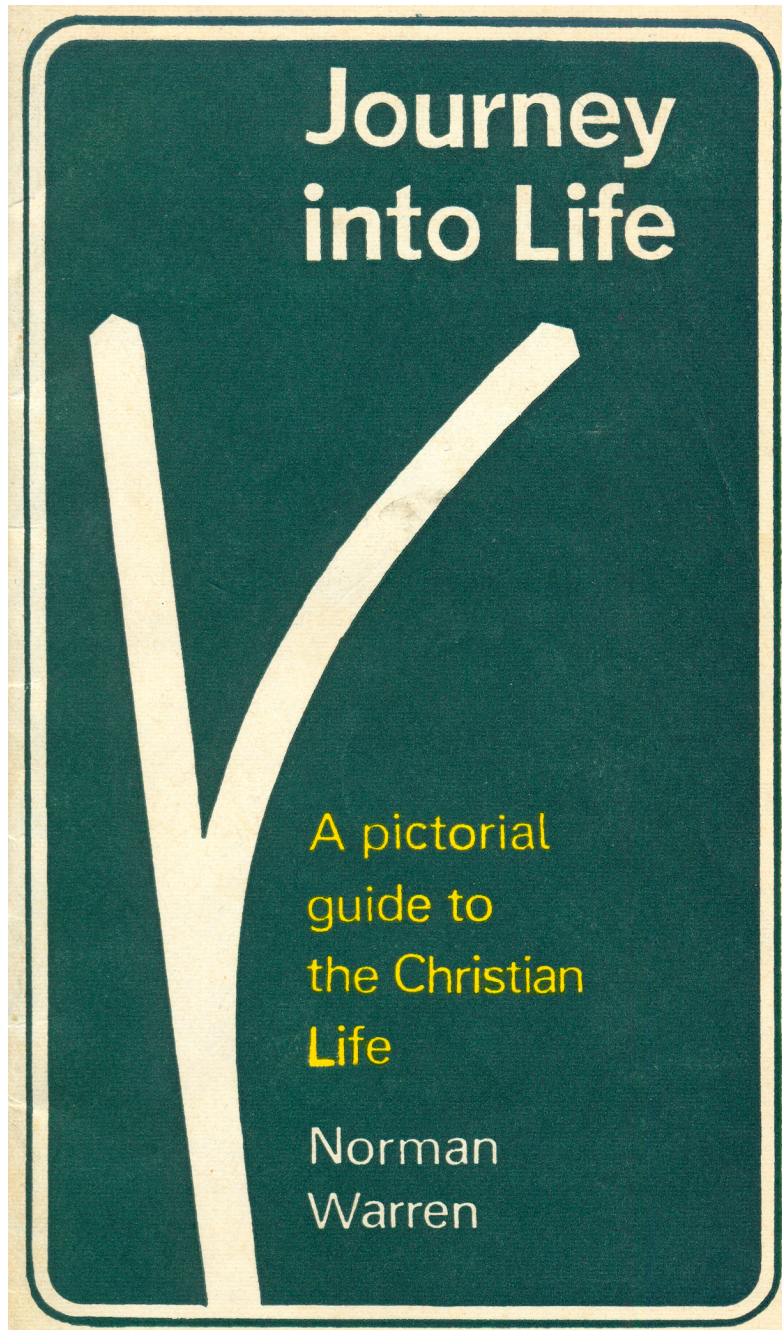
This research is intended to inform contemporary conversations about the future shape of Christian evangelism in the rapidly changing religious landscape of the United Kingdom. The analysis herein of *Journey Into Life*, and its processes of gifting and exchange, moves this research beyond a merely interesting retrospective study of an iconic souvenir and relic of evangelical faith into a detailed exposition of the essential elements of evangelical faith identity in the practice of evangelical religion, particularly evangelism. In its form, content and medium of exchange, the tract *Journey Into Life* and its successors reveal a theology and practice of faith that has been at the heart of evangelical identity for fifty years. As evangelical Christianity becomes increasingly fragmented in post-modernity,⁴² it is important for evangelicals to review and consider the intrinsic nature of evangelical faith, and the extent to which this historical form of evangelical belief and identity is being represented or discarded in contemporary practice. This research of *Journey Into Life* has been conducted to promote a new awareness and understanding of the importance of these historic beliefs and practices in the stories of evangelical Christians, as well as to encourage a renewed consideration of the significance of these for the continuation of a distinct evangelical identity.⁴³ Taking a cue from its material culture methodology, in what follows below, the presentation of this research

⁴² This fragmentation is reflected in categories such as post-evangelical, classic evangelical, conservative evangelical, charismatic evangelical, liberal evangelical and open evangelical. A process thoroughly analysed, charted and categorised in Warner. It is also important to recognise that evangelicalism has always been subject to ‘splits’ and as Bebbington points out this is not new as ‘there was enormous variation in Evangelicalism over time [...] moulded and remoulded by its environment’. Bebbington, p. 276.

⁴³ This research intentionally includes a significant historical dimension as it seeks to record and document a specific and unique ‘moment’ in British evangelical history that followed on from the heady days of 1950s revival expressed in the Billy Graham missions as played out in the biographies and ministries of evangelicals over the following three decades.

thesis begins with a concise description of the object, followed by a reflexive account of my own researcher biography.

Description of The Tract *Journey Into Life*



Journey Into Life is a one thousand seven hundred and seventy-one word, sixteen page illustrated tract that sold over thirty million copies in the United Kingdom alone. From the first publication in 1963, it became an 'article', 'visual artefact'

and 'object' of evangelical faith, widely embraced and accepted as a standard popular text, that not only expressed something core to evangelical belief, but also served to define and shape it.⁴⁴ Its format as a small pocket-sized⁴⁵ professionally designed booklet distinguished it from the earlier throw away 'flyer', becoming an article of 'haptic visuality',⁴⁶ carried in handbags and wallets, often becoming a treasured personal possession, a 'collectable',⁴⁷ 'souvenir', 'relic' and 'icon' of the evangelical faith. The familiar highway-code graphic based on the then new motorway signage designed by Kinneir and Calvert in 1963,⁴⁸ presents a right turn onto a new road offering a journey into 'the Christian life'. The tract is signposted as a 'pictorial guide', in the form of text interspersed with twenty-six pen and ink drawings that, taking a cue from the tabloid newspapers of the time, draws the reader's eye first to the picture and then to the text, thus breaking free from the existing 'logocentric' Christian publishing conventions of the time, by subordinating the verbal to the visual. In a manner reminiscent of the extra-biblical annotations first found in the Scofield Reference Bible,⁴⁹ *Journey Into Life* provides commentary through visual images that deeply influence the reader in the hermeneutical task.

Falsifying Common Answers

The tract begins by falsifying common answers to the question 'what is a Christian?' with each wrong answer being followed by the refrain 'that doesn't make *you* a Christian'. These hypothetical objections reflect the context of a widespread institutionalised Christian nominalism, with the beginnings of an

⁴⁴ Norman L. Warren, *Journey into Life: A Pictorial Guide to the Christian Life* (London: Falcon Booklets, 1963).

⁴⁵ Measuring four by seven inches.

⁴⁶ Stephen Pattison, *Seeing Things: Deepening Relations with Visual Artefacts*, (London: SCM, 2007), p. 15. 'The haptic denotes the sense of vision that touches, caresses and interacts more mutually with objects, rather than just surveying them from afar'.

⁴⁷ Pete Ward, *The Authoritative Guide to Plastic Collectables* (Leicester: Silverdale Books, 2001), p. 7. Ward says of these 'things' that 'suddenly we miss them and remember fondly those long-gone eras of exuberance'.

⁴⁸ Caroline McClatchey, 'The Road Sign as Design Classic', (BBC News, 2011).

<www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-15990443> [Accessed 16th March 2017] Graphic Designers Jock Kinneir and Margaret Calvert's 'designs changed the British landscape and they became a role model for modern road signage all over the world'.

⁴⁹ Cyrus I. Schofield, *The Schofield Reference Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1917).

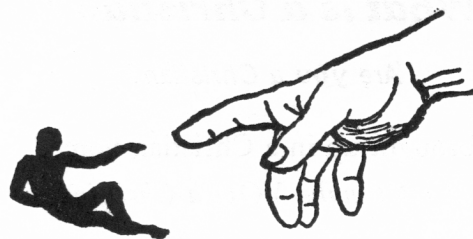
acknowledgement of growing religious pluralism in the United Kingdom in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁵⁰ Warren's judgment of who is, and who is not a Christian, privileges an Evangelical Protestant emphasis on the experience of a moment of personal conversion experience, rather than the universal Catholic Sacramental understanding that, although not discounting the experience of personal conversion, would identify Baptism as the initial point of inclusion.⁵¹ The trajectory of the tract is thus set on a course that seeks to explain from this particular evangelical perspective what a Christian is, as well as how to become one through the mechanism of personal conversion.

Problematizing the Journey

Having offered a journey into [the Christian] life, the tract problematizes the journey with six pages and twelve illustrations dedicated to explaining 'the problem of sin', all 'proof-texted' using short quotes from scripture.⁵²

Illustrations provide the tract's theology of sin as follows:

1. The hand of God connecting with the hand of man.

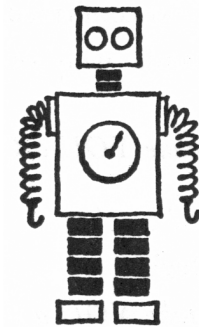


⁵⁰ Warren. Hypothetical objections: 'I was brought up in a Christian home'. 'My mother always went to church'. 'I believe in doing good and helping others - quite right too but so do the Mohammedans'. 'I was baptized and confirmed'. 'I believe in God'.

⁵¹ Whilst it is beyond the scope of this thesis to consider the nuances the Roman Catholic doctrine of conversion this contrast is made in the awareness of contemporary Roman Catholic teaching on conversion with an emphasis on 'personal encounter with Jesus Christ'. Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel - Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2013), p. 7.

⁵² Alister McGrath, *Christianity's Dangerous Idea: The Protestant Revolution* (London: SPCK, 2007), p. 103. Historical critique of proof texting in evangelical Protestantism.

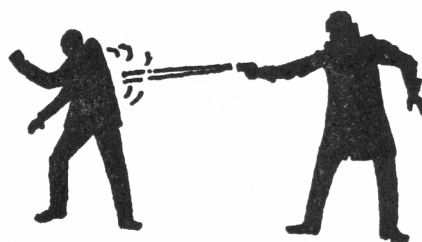
2. A robot to show the anonymity of human freewill – what it is not.



3. Two roads sign posted 'Man's Way' or 'God's Way,' (proof text: Romans 3.23).⁵³



4. One person shooting another with a handgun with a clarifying text saying that sin 'is not only murder and stealing, fiddling and dodging'.



⁵³ Romans 3.23 is a key proof text in all the major evangelistic tracts of this period including: Bill Bright, 'Four Spiritual Laws', (Orlando: Campus Crusade For Christ, 1965); 'Knowing God Personally', ed. by Campus Crusade for Christ (Orlando: Campus Crusade for Christ 1985); 'Steps to Peace with God', (Charlotte: The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, 1953); 'Bridge to Life', ed. by The Navigators Great Britain (New Malden: Navpress, 1985).

5. An exam score illustration to reinforce Romans 3.23 that God's standard is perfect and that as sinners 'we are just not good enough'.

50 — PASS

49 — FAIL
5 — FAIL

6. A figure pointing at himself saying 'I'm my own boss, it's my own life, I can do what I like with it'. (proof text: Isaiah 53.6).



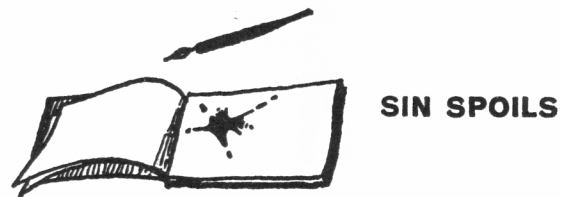
7. The same figure pushing somebody away as well as turning their own face away. (proof text John 16.9). This is followed by text dealing with sins of omission (proof text: James 4.17).



8. A heart with most of it blanked out with black ink except a segment at the bottom of the heart with an arrow pointing to it saying 'God's Part'. Making the point that 'I sin when I do not love God with all my heart'. (proof text: Matthew 22.37-38).



9. A blot on a page indicating that sin spoils our lives.



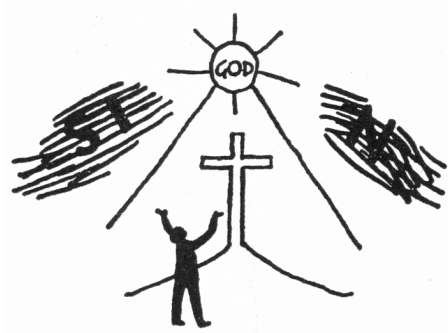
10. Weeds growing outside a greenhouse illustrating sin spreading.



11. A man separated from God who is represented as the sun by a cloud with the word 'sins' in it,



12. Same picture, with the exception that the figure is trying to push through the cloud but can't.

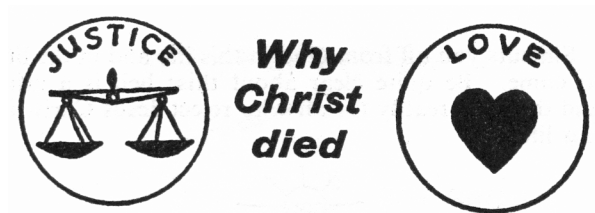


This evangelical exposition of sin concludes by asking the reader the question what they think can be done about this barrier of sin preventing their own *Journey Into life*?⁵⁴ This is interleaved with a picture of Christ on the Cross.

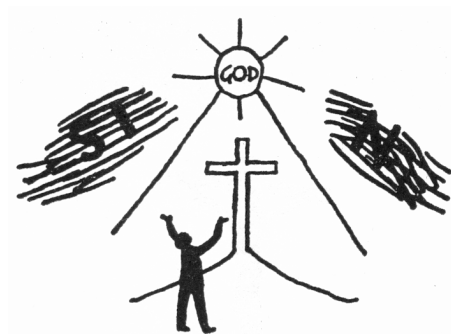
⁵⁴ A twentieth-century evangelical hamartiology that differs from both the Roman Catholic hamartiology based on the virtue/vice, seven-deadly sins, acts of commission and omission model and twenty-first century understandings influenced by contextual considerations such as

The Christian Answer

The Christian 'answer' is put under the heading 'why Christ died', but not before two illustrations are interleaved to show two different sides of God's character in the form of a coin. On one side is the word 'justice' with a picture of scales and on the other side is a picture of a heart accompanied by the word 'love'.



The remaining two pages are then given over to answer the question 'why Christ died?' The text follows a distinctively evangelical 'penal and substitutionary' explanation of the atonement.⁵⁵ The cries of dereliction and victory are illustrated by a person standing before the cross, with God in the sun behind and the cross breaking through the barrier cloud of sin.



The journey and 'way back to God' is portrayed as a threefold way involving God, Jesus and us. The Author employs a Socratic rhetorical method that encourages an aesthetic reading by posing a question to the reader: 'Do you want to remain dissatisfied and only know the empty, passing pleasures of this world?' The reader's response⁵⁶ is incentivised positively by the offering of 'a life that satisfies, that has purpose and meaning, a life that demands the very best in you

Liberation Theology's understanding of sin as well as racial and gender based understandings of sin.

⁵⁵ See chapter 9 'evangelical soteriology' for full explanation of this specific evangelical view of atonement.

⁵⁶ An 'Aesthetic Reading' requiring a response with attention centered directly on what the reader is living through during their relationship with the text. Louise M. Rosenblatt, 'The Aesthetic Transaction', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 20 (1986), 122-28.

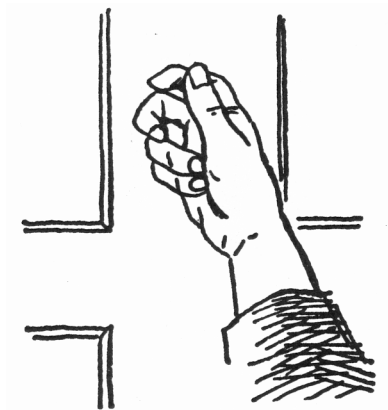
and above all, a life that is pleasing to God'. This life is also framed negatively in terms of a 'wasted life' and 'ruined soul', with the prospect of death without Christ reinforced by a picture of four people carrying a coffin.



The reader's part is outlined in four brief instructions using the mnemonic ABCD (Admit your sin, Believe Christ to bear the penalty for your sin, Consider the cost and Do accept Jesus into your life.)

Christ Knocking at the Door

The image of Christ knocking at the door found in Revelation 3.20 is the central text of this tract, indeed this archetypal image goes on to become the common denominator and apex of many other evangelistic tracts. This text is used to drive home its chief aim and purpose, that is to facilitate the opening of the door of the heart to Jesus Christ so that Christ will come in.⁵⁷



Revelation 3.20 is illustrated in *Journey Into Life* by a drawing of a hand knocking at a door with the explanation:

Jesus Christ waits outside the door of your life. He will not force his way in. He wants to be asked in. The handle is on the inside; only you can

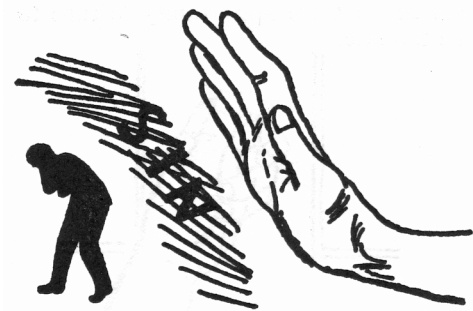
⁵⁷ Often linked in evangelical presentations to Holman Hunt's third version of his painting of Christ at the door of the human heart. Revelation 3.16 is written below the picture. William Holman-Hunt, 'The Light of the World', (1853).

open the door. You become a true Christian when you open the door of your life to Jesus Christ and let him come in and live in your heart and life.

Warren presses home the need for decision in three questions to be 'faced honestly':

1. 'Have you ever taken this step?'
2. 'Is Christ outside your life?'
3. 'Will you let Him in or keep Him out?'

This is illustrated by a hand held out towards a figure who has turned away.



The emphasis here is on 'thoughtful' consideration of the cost of discipleship. The issue of 'surrender' is dealt with in one paragraph entitled 'Something to Consider', under the heading 'Your Part'. Warren's approach is condensed into the following sentence:

Jesus never promised it would be easy to follow him. Expect opposition, sneers and misunderstanding, for every part of your life, your work, friendships, time, money, all must come under His control.

This leads into a model prayer for the person wanting to embark on the journey to become a Christian.⁵⁸ The prayer of commitment covers four areas. Firstly, an acknowledgement and confession of sins. Secondly, a statement of faith in Christ's substitutionary death on the cross 'in my place'. Thirdly, a prayer of 'surrender' with a statement of willingness to repent and to submit to Christ as 'Lord and Master' as well as a willingness to identify with him by not being

⁵⁸ Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 125-33. Longer or reduced versions of this so-called 'sinner's prayer' are a constant in almost all evangelistic tracts, forming part of what Rambo calls the 'decision making ritual'.

‘ashamed of him’. Fourthly, opening of the door and an invitation for Jesus to ‘come in’ to be ‘my Saviour and my Lord forever’.

The Prayer of Commitment

Warren’s prayer offers a complete uninterrupted script that can be read and prayed easily. In keeping with the iconic and visual emphasis of the tract, the prayer is preceded by an illustration of praying hands.⁵⁹



The text of the 115-word prayer is comprised of a series of short sentences:

Lord Jesus Christ,
 I know I have sinned in my thoughts, words, and actions.
 There are so many things I have not done,
 There are so many sinful things I have done.
 I am sorry for my sins and turn from everything I know to be wrong.
 I know you gave your life upon the cross for me.
 Gratefully I give my life back to you.
 Now I ask you to come into my life.
 Come in as my Saviour to cleanse me,
 Come in as my Lord to control me,
 Come in as my friend to be with me,
 And I will serve you all the remaining years of my life in complete
 obedience. *Amen*

This ‘formulaic’ prayer is reminiscent of liturgical acts of contrition, and not dissimilar to the ‘General Confession’ in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* or the Roman Catholic ‘*Confiteor*’. However, it differs because instead of the priest pronouncing absolution, there is an ‘existential absolution’ or ‘self-absolution’ taking place that invites God to come and ‘do it in me’. The prayer is followed by

⁵⁹ The praying hands illustration is reminiscent of Albrecht Durer’s 1508 drawing *Betende Hande* and the illustration of the hand of God reaching out to the man is reminiscent of Michelangelo’s painting of the creation of Adam in the Sistine Chapel in Rome.

an illustration of God's hands reaching out towards the person who has responded in prayer.



Final Suggestions

The final 'suggestions' are placed under the heading 'Christ in you', with the author using the 'active service' formula of 'Food, Air, and Exercise'. These are illustrated with a picture of the Bible.

FOOD



A picture of someone praying.

AIR



And a family going to a Church Service.

WORSHIP



The final exhortations are to 'tell one other person within the next twenty-four hours what you have done, that you have surrendered your life to Christ', with

the instruction not to be ‘ashamed to be known as a Christian at work and at home’.⁶⁰ This is illustrated with two figures talking and the word ‘witness’.



Reflexivity

Researcher Bias

Qualitative research in practical theology recognises reflexivity as one of the most crucial aspects of social research with some researchers proposing that it is perhaps ‘the most crucial dimension of the qualitative research process’.⁶¹

Reflexivity in practical theology is understood as the process of critical self-reflection and therefore it is important to begin by identifying and locating myself⁶² in terms of my own epistemology, theology and personal socio-cultural *habitus*.⁶³ This thesis has developed from my biography as a ministerial practitioner in the Church of England, as well as a practical theologian and qualitative researcher in contemporary ecclesiology. My epistemology is post-structuralist, critically realist, but attentive to the social construction of reality.⁶⁴ I am a self-confessed child of ‘solid modernity’ inhabiting a ‘liquid world’,⁶⁵ being attuned to the narrative expressions of ‘ordinary theology’⁶⁶ in voices of twentieth-century conservative evangelicalism, where I have been located as a

⁶⁰ Illustrated by a bible, a figure praying, a family going to church and a person sharing their faith.

⁶¹ John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM Press, 2006), p. 59.

⁶² This section follows contemporary practice in the presentation of reflexivity in ethnographic qualitative research through an intentional adoption of the first-person to emphasise the importance of the role of subjectivity within reflexivity. By using the first person the ‘situated’ nature of this research is properly and appropriately recognised within this account of the research reflexivity. Donna Haraway, ‘Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective’, *Feminist Studies*, 4 (1988). Also see use of first person in Anthony Reddie, ‘People Matter Too! The Politics and Method of Doing Black Liberation Theology’, *Practical Theology*, 1.1 (2008).

⁶³ Chris Rojek, *Cultural Studies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p. 78. *Habitus* understood here as the ‘generative principles, rules, ways of seeing the world, schemes of classification and values that we acquire as a normal part of living in our communities’.

⁶⁴ Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Penguin Books, 1966).

⁶⁵ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).

⁶⁶ Astley, *Ordinary Theology*.

‘subjective insider’.⁶⁷ My biography and practice of ministry has been closely bound up in the United Kingdom conservative evangelical interpretive community,⁶⁸ with its process of faith mediation, religious identification and articles of faith. It is a culture that has indelibly influenced my outlook and therefore requires a research methodology that starts by identifying myself within the socio-religious context that has shaped and authorised my own point of view. I carry part of the history of this research subject in my own story⁶⁹ and, whilst not pretending to any greater level of objectivity, this emic perspective is privileged. I claim no ‘Punctum Archimedis’ or ‘God’s eye view over reality’,⁷⁰ acknowledging as Rorty observes:

there are no skyhooks or super-cultural observation platforms to allow us to escape from our acculturation and no hypothetical systems that lead us to a universal perspective.⁷¹

The challenge to maintain a reflexive and self-aware⁷² research methodology, has required a continuous intentional commitment to identify my surreptitious agenda, in what Reeves calls our inner and often unconscious ‘forces and ego drives, that influence the way that we see, interpret, and respond’.⁷³ This ‘*Vorurteil*’.⁷⁴ as Gadamer argues, is itself a source of knowledge, and I

⁶⁷ Reddie, p. 47.

⁶⁸ Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretative Communities* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. vii-viii; Zigmunt Bauman, *Community Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), pp. 65 & 70-71. Bauman adopts Kant’s term ‘aesthetic community’ whose sense of ‘objectivity is woven entirely from the friable threads of subjective judgements’.

⁶⁹ Including some painful and confusing experiences through being caught up in the ‘bi-furcation of the evangelical tradition’. Warner, p. xviii.

⁷⁰ Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 51.

⁷¹ Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 213.

⁷² Lynch, *Understanding Theology and Popular Culture*, p. 112. Particularly as Lynch advises through attention to our ‘blind spots’.

⁷³ Tom Reeves, *Managing Effectively: Developing Yourself through Experience* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann Limited, 1994), p. 107.

⁷⁴ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Bloomsbury, 1975), p. 283 & 313. *Vorurteil* or Prejudice the first Gadamer’s four hermeneutical principles of prejudice, tradition, authority and horizon.

understand my historical 'situatedness' in [evangelical] tradition, not as containment but as a vantage point and horizon.⁷⁵

Growing-Up Evangelical

Growing-up evangelical⁷⁶ through involvement with 'Crusader' bible classes in the late 1960s meant that I inhabited the world of meaning in which *Journey Into Life* was developed. Following spiritual experimentation in the emerging 'new religious movements' of the late 1970s, I re-entered the world of conservative evangelicalism in 1981, enthusiastically embracing a new identity as a conservative evangelical, being enculturated into its privileged sub-culture with its own distinctive 'plumage'⁷⁷ and decidedly conservative character. It was a world of house parties in country mansions, with camps on private school campuses, and a city church filled to the brim with former public school 'girls' and 'boys' identified in a '*bricolage*' of things,⁷⁸ such as the *Filofax*, *Barbour*, and *Brogues*.⁷⁹ Rooted in the post-war evangelicalism of its leaders such as Eric Nash,⁸⁰ John Stott⁸¹ and Billy Graham,⁸² shaped institutionally by the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union and the Church Pastoral Aid Society, this unique culture became enshrined in its popular literature of which the road signs tract *Journey Into Life* became an iconic signature artefact.

⁷⁵ I bring a theological position, social class, ethnicity, gender, politics, education, ontology, epistemology, psychological, emotional and temperamental dispositions, disability, and age.

⁷⁶ Pete Ward, *Growing up Evangelical* (London: SPCK, 1996), p. 34.

⁷⁷ Martyn Percy, *Clergy: The Origin of Species* (London: Continuum, 2006), pp. 88-90.

⁷⁸ Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (London: Paladin, 1973), p. 11. 'This general semiology of our bourgeois world'.

⁷⁹ Dick Hebdige, *Subculture the Meaning of Style* (London: Routledge, 1979), p. 53. Rojek, pp. 102-06.

⁸⁰ Andrew Atherstone, *Archbishop Justin Welby: Risk-Taker and Reconciler* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, 2014), p. 33; John Eddison, *Bash: A Study in Spiritual Power* (Basingstoke: Marshalls, 1993). Eric Nash (Bash) founder of 'Iwerne' minster camps for boys from the top thirty public schools. Alumni include Nicky Gumbel, Dick Lucas, David Sheppard, John Stott, David Watson, and Archbishop Justin Welby.

⁸¹ Chapman, pp. 13-18. Dudley-Smith, *John Stott*.

⁸² Billy Graham's influence on this generation of evangelicals was significant raising confidence in their evangelical identity and power as evidenced in the 1954 Haringay crusade that attracted 1,750,000 people and was the biggest single venture in evangelism in the twentieth-century.

My *Journey Into Life* Narrative

The seeds of this research were sown in 1990 on the day of my ordination into the Diaconate of the Church of England. It grew from a conversation with Norman Warren, the author of *Journey Into Life*, who in his role as the Archdeacon of Rochester enthused about the opportunities that were in front of me as I began life as a curate. He talked passionately about the privilege of being able to function as an evangelist in pastoral ministry through holding, carrying and sharing this *Journey Into Life* gospel. My story is therefore part of the story of *Journey Into Life* as I set out on an inherited practice of ministry, built around the promotion of the gospel as presented in *Journey Into Life*. Reflecting on the theological and cultural authority that this gospel paradigm had exercised in my own life and ministry, I began to wonder at the way this apparently insignificant piece of ephemeral literature had come to exercise such a powerful level of authority, not only in my own life, but also in the lives of other evangelicals, particularly evangelical leaders. It made me want to understand more about how and why this particular artefact *Journey Into Life* had such a significant impact on my generation of evangelicals, shaping not only our personal faith narrative, but also our ecclesial identity, theology, missionary strategy and parochial work. It also raised broader questions about the importance of *Journey Into Life* and its evangelical gospel message for the ongoing expression of evangelical identity and indeed the continued existence of evangelicalism itself. This tract *Journey Into Life* has been a defining ‘article’ of evangelical faith and its impact, afterlife and history of effects is the subject of the following empirical examination.

Chapter Two - Research Methodology

Research Design

This chapter outlines the specific empirical qualitative research methodology developed to investigate the impact, afterlife and history of effects of this defining article of faith in the lived religion of evangelical Christians in the United Kingdom. Access to the total social phenomenon surrounding the gifting and exchange of this religious tract, required a methodology that could capture the multi-faceted and complex interaction and articulation of processes involved in the tract's production, consumption, and impact on the formation of evangelicals and evangelical identity. In order to open-up the depth, richness and complexity within this intricate matrix of practices a multi-method approach was specifically and purposefully chosen for this research of *Journey Into Life*. A particular set of key qualitative social science research methods and approaches to practical theology were brought together to create a research design with the capacity and capability to explore the labyrinthine complexity lying behind the apparent simplicity of this small, seemingly insignificant and innocuous religious tract. This chapter outlines and explains the decisions that were taken in the research design process that brought together the qualitative methods of a case study, material culture theory, gift exchange theory, semi-structured interviews, narrative analysis and qualitative data analysis methods, with the disciplines of practical theology in theological observation and reflection, theological discourse analysis, ordinary theology and systematic theological mapping. The exposition of this specific multi-method theological and qualitative social research methodology begins with the epistemological and ethical considerations that have underpinned the design and execution of this research.

Epistemology

Empirical study of the tract and its afterlife indicated an ontology inviting a model of research founded on the notion of *Journey Into Life* as an 'apprehendable reality' that can be penetrated by the gaze of social scientific investigation.¹ The text is however 'not autonomous of its context'² and was difficult to make sense of without any reference to what in Biblical hermeneutics would be called the *Sitz im Leben*, the human social environment that brought it into being. It has therefore been important to recognise and identify the underlying values that have shaped the world of meaning that has formed around the object and its use. For this reason, attention to the context and world-views in the construction and interpretation of the object have played an important role in this investigation, endorsing a qualified constructivist epistemology founded on the ontological assumption that knowledge, and the means by which it is perceived, are to a greater or lesser extent socially constructed,³ whilst also retaining the balancing perspective of critical realism by 'recognising that such constructions are always provisional and open to challenge'.⁴ Attention has therefore been drawn to the development and construction of subjective meanings, particularly in determining the extent to which *Journey Into Life* only makes sense within its own particular social and historical context of late modern evangelicalism in the United Kingdom.

The central role of narratives and narrative analysis in this research recognises that one of the key ways that people make sense of experience is through putting those experiences into narrative form. This research has

¹ Yvonna S. Lincoln and Eglon G. Guba, *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2000), p. 105. This research is based on the metaphysical assumption (ontology) of 'critical realism' but is also highly attentive to the social construction of reality in the interpretation of the text. See chapter 1 footnote 68 for the importance of the interpretative community in the construction of meaning. Swinton and Mowat, pp. 34-37; Martyn Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide for Small-Scale Social Research Projects* (Maidenhead: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 332. Positivism understood as an approach that seeks to apply the natural science model of research investigations of the social world'.

² Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Analysis: Qualitative Research Methods* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1993), p. 21.

³ Berger and Luckmann, p. 13.

⁴ Swinton and Mowat, p. 37.

therefore been attentive to participants' 'ways of constructing meaning and analyzing how it is accomplished'.⁵ There has also been the recognition that in the process of telling and retelling of participants' stories and in giving voice to people's experiences the researcher is making interpretive and representational decisions. Narratives are themselves interpretive and, in turn, require interpretation as 'they do not speak for themselves, or provide direct access to other times, places, or cultures'.⁶ The interviews from which these narratives have been derived are themselves 'conversations in which both participant/teller and listener/questioner develop meaning together'.⁷ To this end people with a story about *Journey Into Life* were invited to tell their story and through the process of listening, telling and retelling, that story has been co-created and reconstructed as outlined below.

Research Ethics

Raised levels of ethical awareness have been integral to the research design. The following section is a review⁸ of the ethical considerations⁹ particularly following the decision to interview for the purposes of primary data collection. The act of people retelling their life story was 'saturated with moral and ethical issues',¹⁰ from the process of sensitive listening through to the confidentiality and security of the interview data. The following steps were therefore taken to safeguard the interviewees and their interview data. Each participant was contacted and an interview was arranged at their convenience. As advised, the lower age limit was sixteen and there was no upper age limit, although the retrospective nature of this research meant that the interviewees were in mid-life. The primary ethical concern for this research has been to ensure the social and psychological well-

⁵ Riessman, p. 4.

⁶ Ibid. p. 22.

⁷ Ibid. p. 55.

⁸ 'Ethical review and the raising of ethical awareness require thinking through the possible consequences and impact of any research on its participants'. Ron Iphofen, *Ethical Decision-Making in Social Research* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 13.

⁹ Research Ethics Received Full Approval from Kings College London Ethics Panel on 30th August 2012. Reference Number: REP (EM)/11/12-71. Modifications approved 12/2012 and 2/2015.

¹⁰ Steiner Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing* (London: Sage, 2009), p. 62.

being of each research participant. With all participants disclosing personal biographical information there was an ethical and moral responsibility to handle this data with care, sensitivity and respect. This was achieved not only by making sure that the data was securely held and appropriately encrypted but also through the removal of all personal details in the research narratives that could identify the participants.¹¹ If, on reflection, any of the interviewees were not comfortable with the interview or were perhaps unhappy with something they had said, they were repeatedly made aware of the right to withdraw their data up until 31st August 2016. Participants were also made fully aware of their anonymity and following best practice all participants were offered the opportunity to read the final report prior to completion. All participants were asked to read the agreed information sheet that explained the aims of the research and the participant's rights to withdraw. The consent form was explained and then signed by the participant and the interviewer prior to the interview but only after time had been given for the participant to read and digest the contents of the information sheet.¹² No interview took place without the participant being entirely clear and in agreement with the process. In terms of benefits and risks from participation in the study, the process of talking about and reflecting on their own life journey was perceived as a positive and creative one for participants enhanced by the measures taken to secure the anonymity of respondents.

Case Study Method

Advantages and Disadvantages

The case study focus on 'the one rather than the many' offered by a survey approach had distinct advantages for this research. As Denscombe points out:

¹¹ All data was kept in accordance with Kings College London IT security framework with attention having been given to protecting the anonymity of research participants. Participants names have been anonymised.

¹² Copy of consent form follows research thesis appendices.

What a case study can do that a survey normally cannot do is to study things in detail [...] and discover things that might not have become apparent through more superficial research.¹³

This was the basis for the strategic decision in this research to opt for a detailed and focused study of the one tract *Journey Into Life*, rather than attempt to study a broad sweep of a number of tracts. This research choice demonstrated a decision to go for depth and detail over breadth. The strength of a case study for this research has been its ability to draw out the development of distinctive sets of meanings and practices around an object. Du Gay and Hall's consumption study of the physical artefact the Sony Walkman, demonstrated the way that meanings and practices are often articulated around an object and therefore the study of those objects provides a way to understand the distinctive culture that produced it. Taking this one object as a case study enabled this research to explore in detail the underlying circuits of culture by identifying the major cultural processes that lay behind the representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation of *Journey Into Life*. This single object case study strategy for this research of *Journey Into Life* offered a unique way into the world of meaning of conservative evangelical culture to discover the way that this tract had been used to 'make sense of things and events'.¹⁴ Just as Du Gay and Hall's case study extrapolated data that got behind the use of the Walkman, this case study was able to get behind the practice of tract usage and its impact in a way that had not been done before. The advantage of the case study method for this research was that it offered the opportunity to address the 'broader range of historical and behavioural issues'¹⁵ involved in the development of *Journey Into Life* and its impact on evangelical identity. However, the advantages of the wider variety of evidence offered by the case study method had to be weighed against the greater demands placed on the researcher, particularly the sole researcher in this small scale social science research project. As Astley points out, the gathering and analysis of 'rich data' is so time-consuming that 'such research

¹³ Denscombe, p. 36.

¹⁴ Du Gay, p. 10.

¹⁵ Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research Design and Methods*, 5th edn (Los Angeles: Sage, 2014).

data can inevitably only draw on small samples',¹⁶ but as demonstrated in this research these small samples generated a surprisingly voluminous and abundant data pool.

Case Study Sampling Criteria

With this research being a retrospective study there was a significant element of risk attached to the process of being able to find people who had been impacted by this tract. Although there was anecdotal evidence about the impact of the tract through casual conversations with evangelical Christians there was a significant level of uncertainty about the accessibility of these stories. Whilst there was a nostalgic fondness and memory surrounding *Journey Into Life* it soon became clear that actually finding any participants was going to be challenging. This concern was not unwarranted as the process of finding the research sample took almost two years and had to be approached from three different angles. Firstly, using the researcher's own professional platform as a theological educator in continuing ministerial education it was possible to talk about this proposed research at various professional conferences and this gave some initial leads. Secondly, this research used press releases and an article that was published in two diocesan newspapers. Thirdly, the researcher visited a major Christian summer conference called New-Wine where this research was publicised using posters and by means of a radio interview calling for stories of people who had been impacted by *Journey Into Life*. In addition to responses from these strategies there were 'snowball samples'¹⁷ through nominations and referrals as the initial interviewees provided contacts and further 'leads', endorsing the 'emergent and sequential'¹⁸ approach originally suggested by Lincoln and Guba. The initial sense of uncertainty surrounding the difficulty of finding participants with the necessary experience of *Journey Into Life* was relieved as the research gained momentum and the anticipated sequence of

¹⁶ Astley, p. 98.

¹⁷ Snowball sampling works through referrals from existing research participants. Barbara Merrill and Linden West, *Using Biographical Methods in Social Science Research* (London: Sage, 2009), p. 108.

¹⁸ Y.S. Lincoln and E.G. Guba, *Naturalistic Enquiry* (London: Sage, 1985).

referrals occurred, with the result that it was possible to gain fourteen in-depth, recorded and fully transcribed interviews.¹⁹

This approach to gaining a research sample had both strengths and weaknesses. The weakness of the sample was that with the exception of the Brown interview it was constituted from people who had responded positively to the gifting of the tract. What it could not fully capture was the story of people who had been given the tract but rejected it. Whilst both the Brown interview and the Hurst interview provided a limited view into the rejection of gift, the sample could not provide a comprehensive study of the rejection process. However, as demonstrated in the interview narratives the story told by this particular sample provided the specific information that was required to address the research questions. This sample from the evangelical faith community told a story about the formation of a particular and unique evangelical Christian identity in a way that a data set drawn from a sample of those who rejected the tract would not have been able to do. An unexpected bonus of this research sample came with the realisation that all the respondents in the sample were involved in some form of Christian leadership. It had not been the intention of the researcher to target Christian leaders but the perspective that these leaders were able to give, especially in terms of professional theological reflection added to the overall depth of the study.

Material Culture Theory

Artefact and Object

Material culture theory has provided the lens through which to study the theological artefact and object that is *Journey Into Life*. Material culture methodologies look at either an object or an artefact²⁰ by opening them up and unwrapping them in order to reveal the 'values, ideas, attitudes and assumptions

¹⁹ Comprising of twelve participant interviews plus the author and publisher interviews. A sample size appropriate to a single researcher biographical study. See Merrill and West, pp. 104-5.

²⁰ In addition to objects and artefacts Material Culture methodologies in religious studies also engage with the broader material world of 'landscapes, tools, buildings, households, goods, clothing and art'. McDannell, p. 2.

of a particular community or society at a given time',²¹ In material culture research artefacts can be either more specific religious objects or just ordinary things often irreverently referred to as the 'stuff'.²² The sort of thing that 'gathers dust on shelves' and coffee tables, 'religious stuff'²³ that has not mattered in traditional academic accounts of religious history and culture but is significant when exploring the formation of identity and belief. As McDannell points out 'the artefacts of religious belief and practice exist as a compelling category of evidence long overdue for informed historical and cultural analysis'.²⁴ As a signature artefact of conservative evangelical every day ephemeral literature *Journey Into Life* is part of this compelling category of evidence easily overlooked or dismissed as trivial. These 'religious artefacts act as windows onto a particular religious world',²⁵ and so the study of the tract *Journey Into Life* as an artefact has offered a way of seeing that looks behind the object and provides a window into the beliefs and practices of the community of production.²⁶ Importantly for this research 'belief' is taken to be 'not merely as discursive ascent to a proposition or teaching, but the entire body of human activities that make a force, an event, or a place sacred'.²⁷ Researching *Journey Into Life* from this material culture perspective offered a wide-angled lens that not only captured the espoused evangelical teaching, but also the broad range of signifying practices and cultural activity that surround the artefact. The underlying premise of material culture theory that has been so valuable for this thesis is that objects 'reflect consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, the beliefs of individuals who made, commissioned, purchased or used them'.²⁸ Through the examination of *Journey Into Life* as an object and artefact, this

²¹ Jules David Prown, 'Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method', *Winterthur Portfolio*, 17 (1982). p. 1-2.

²² A term favoured by Daniel Miller, *Stuff* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010).

²³ David Morgan, *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. xi. 'Religious stuff is a particular category of the things that mark the halls and walls of everyday life'.

²⁴ McDannell, p. 4.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 3.

²⁶ David Morgan, *Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 73. Material culture research 'examines the objects, spaces and ideas in which belief takes shape'.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Prown, pp. 1-2.

research has enabled the investigation of the ways in which this piece of evangelical paper has influenced and maintained the beliefs, practices and corporate identity of conservative evangelicals.

Gift Exchange Theory

Material culture studies that focus on gift exchange practices arising from the work of Mauss and his *Essai sur le don*²⁹ have been important, not only in the discipline of anthropological ethnography, but also in the development of this research methodology. Barclay's recent adoption of gift exchange theory in his study of St Paul's theology of grace has illustrated the power of this approach which he argues provides 'some valuable angles of perception'³⁰ in theological research. The five core themes identified in the interview data in this study center around the giving and receiving of *Journey Into Life* as a gift. In thinking about how to interrogate that data it made sense to employ a theory that was designed to explore this very process. Gift exchange theory offers an apposite gaze that enables exploration of the 'total social phenomena'³¹ in the gifting and exchange of the cultural artefact *Journey Into Life*. Hendry's contemporary work on reading the gift particularly the wrapping, unwrapping³² and 'omiyage'³³ in Japanese gift exchange practices, has provided a powerful lens for analysis of the evangelical practices surrounding the 'total prestation'³⁴ of *Journey Into Life*. Hendry's emphasis on the wrapping of the gift and its external attraction was an important factor in the discoveries within this research about the way the *Journey Into Life* acted as an object of desire with people being attracted to it and picking it up.

²⁹ Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (Connecticut: Martino Publishing, 2011).

³⁰ John M.G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015).

³¹ Mauss, p. 1.

³² Joy Hendry, *Wrapping Culture: Politeness, Presentation, and Power in Japan and Other Societies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 13.

³³ Ibid. p. 36. *Omiyage* a souvenir that brings back a sense of the place that has been visited.

³⁴ Mauss, p. 3.

Theological Reflection

Theology as a way of seeing

This research methodology brings together qualitative empirical social research with established methods of theological reflection. *Journey Into Life* is a theological artefact and a generator of theological disclosure through the co-creation of a theological discourse, expressed in the espoused theology of the participant group. Attentiveness to the object is itself a theological act resulting in a research methodology that is 'theological all the way through'.³⁵ The act of selecting and then continually keeping the object central was a theological move that drew upon ontological and theological presuppositions, affecting not only what was seen but also how it was seen, evaluated and understood. As McGrath argues, theology offers 'a way of seeing reality that brings a transformation and a transvaluation of our understanding' and 'opening up new possibilities for perception and attention', enabling 'habits of engagement with reality that allow it to be seen, understood, and evaluated in new ways'.³⁶ It is these new possibilities for perception and attention, as well as new ways of seeing and understanding the object *Journey Into Life* that this research has looked to theology to provide. Without this theological perspective, the study of *Journey Into Life* would only be able to provide a partial and therefore inadequate analysis of what was going on in its gifting and exchange.

Theological Observation

This research is centered on the observation of an object, but it must be acknowledged that this process of observation is not neutral or 'objective' as it is itself already value laden as 'we do not simply see things' but see them 'through a set of theoretical spectacles, which help us to interpret and assess what we observe'.³⁷ So it is important to acknowledge that 'an implicit, intuitive process

³⁵ Following the conviction of the ARCS team that 'research done into faith practices is theological all the way through'. Helen Cameron and others, *Talking About God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2010), p. 51.

³⁶ Alister McGrath, *The Cultivation of a Theological Vision* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), pp. 109-14.

³⁷ Ibid. p. 114.

of theological reflection is already taking place in the process of observation and reflection'.³⁸ The interview participants who read *Journey Into Life* and then talked about it in a research interview were engaging in a creative act of theological reflection, just as much as the researcher who co-created the narrative of encounter from that reflection. As Swinton argues, theology has 'a methodological voice that is deeply influential on the process of observation'³⁹ influencing the way the 'ethnographer's look is shaped, formed and practiced'.⁴⁰ The process of observation and engagement with the object *Journey Into Life* was therefore in itself imbued with the implicit theology of all who looked at it including both the researcher and the researched.

Practical Theology and Ordinary Theological Reflection

The dominant model for practical theology as represented in the form of pastoral cycles and pastoral spirals that 'do' theology are useful in drawing together empirical explorations of experience, with an evaluative or normative process of interpretation utilising a correlational methodology.⁴¹ Central to this approach is the process of 'theological reflection' which as Ward argues is often part of the reasoning that is already taking place in Christian communities.⁴² Such theological reasoning is simultaneously taking place at different loci within the research of *Journey Into Life* itself, becoming particularly visible within the 'operant theology' of the research participants.⁴³ By hosting theological conversations within the process of the interviews the participants' engagement in further and new theological reflection was facilitated, as they sought to correlate their previous experience of *Journey Into Life* with their current operant theologies. This endorsed Healy's argument that the weakness of the

³⁸ Ibid. p. 115.

³⁹ John Swinton, *Where Is Your Church? Moving Towards a Hospitable and Sanctified Ethnography* (Cambridge: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), p. 90.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Paul Ballard and John Pritchard, *Practical Theology in Action* (London: SCM, 1996); Laurie Green, *Lets Do Theology: Resources for Contextual Theology* (London: Continuum, 2009); Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2008).

⁴² Pete Ward, *Participation and Mediation: A Practical Theology for the Liquid Church* (London: SCM Press, 2008), p. 48.

⁴³ Cameron and others p. 54. 'The theology embedded within the actual practices of a group'.

correlation methodology within ecclesiology is that it can easily fail to take into account the complexities of the relationship between the people's experience and their theology. It is to these complexities of embodied and lived theologies and ordinary theological reflection that this research has been attentive.⁴⁴

Theological Voices

Astley's concept of ordinary theology was developed to describe 'the theological beliefs and processes of believing that find expression in the God-talk' of believers.⁴⁵ This methodological approach of attending to the voices of believers themselves, already had a history in material culture studies and had for some time been employed in contemporary ecclesiological studies. In 1985, Orsi's historical study of the Madonna of 115th Street used the voices of the members and leaders of New York's Italian immigrant community to get behind official Roman Catholic dogma, uncovering unorthodox religious beliefs and practices that had helped shape and maintain a common identity through some very difficult years following immigration and integration into the United States of America.⁴⁶ In 1995, McDannell published her material culture research which included a study of Mormon garments in the development and maintenance of Mormon identity, demonstrating the theological potential of attending to the voices of practicing believers.⁴⁷ This attention to the ordinary voices of theology in ecclesiological research has been increasingly embraced right across the field, including historical approaches, such as Duffy's work on the voices of Morebath that opened a new window into the beliefs of late medieval Christians during the English Reformation.⁴⁸ The potential of this methodology in contemporary ecclesiological research can be seen in Christies' recent Christological study which tuned into the voices of congregations and their leaders, to uncover their

⁴⁴ Nicholas M. Healy, *Church, World and the Christian Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 39.

⁴⁵ Astley, p. 1. Astley's interest was focused on those with no scholarly theological education.

⁴⁶ Robert A. Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

⁴⁷ McDannell, pp. 198-221.

⁴⁸ Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001).

real underlying soteriological beliefs.⁴⁹ In a similar way, it is through the voices of evangelical Christians talking about their engagement with the object *Journey Into Life*, that this research has sought to uncover the real motivating beliefs and ordinary theology of this significant evangelical faith community in the United Kingdom.

Social Location and Theological Reflection

Attentiveness to this ordinary theological reflection that engages with the complexities of embodied belief and the lived experience of faith, places a strong emphasis on 'the reality of practice'. Taking up Haraway's notion of '*situated knowledge*', Graham promotes the idea that 'a situated or positional epistemology' is able to acknowledge its own uniqueness and 'locatedness' whilst still generating reliable political and ethical sensibilities'.⁵⁰ Graham highlights the importance of practice that encourages 'disclosure' from within the practical reasoning of a community, putting a high-value on the practice as a 'generator of theological disclosure'. As Graham explains:

The situated and contingent nature of value and meaning implies that any divine, ultimate and transcendent dimension to human experience will only be authentically and reliably apprehended in the midst of human practice. The value-directed practices of the Christian community thus constitute the primary realm of human-divine encounter; theological disclosure is therefore material, incarnational and sacramental.⁵¹

Graham offers 'resources and methods' which enable communities of faith (and their critics) to give an account of themselves arguing that:

Pastoral theology will also expose the social relations... of a faith-community to scrutiny, testing how its contemporary practices seek to validate and revise historic ideals.⁵²

⁴⁹ Christie.

⁵⁰ Graham, p. 9.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 10.

⁵² Ibid. pp. 10-11.

It is in this form of exposition and scrutinisation of the practices of evangelism in *Journey Into Life* that this thesis has sought to apprehend and engage with in the embodied theology as disclosed in the experience and practices of the mid twentieth-century British evangelical faith community.

Theological Discourse Analysis

In this particular research methodology, there is an intentional process of 'complexification' that is taking place in the exploration of the embodied practices of production, distribution, reading, reception and further dissemination of *Journey Into Life*. The site of theological disclosure is found not only through engagement with the artefact itself but in the discourse that surrounds the visual and verbal text that is *Journey Into Life*. Rose, in her work on discourse analysis strategies in visual culture, divides her analysis into two categories. In the first she identifies those who tend 'to pay rather more attention to the notion of discourse articulated through various kinds of images and verbal texts', and in the second category she distinguishes those who tend 'to pay more attention to the practices of institutions than to visual images and verbal texts'.⁵³ *Journey Into Life* is a text and visual artefact that articulates a particular theological discourse through various kinds of images and verbal texts that often have an uneasy and awkward relationship with the discourses surrounding the practices of their ecclesial institutions. It is the visual and verbal discourse surrounding the text and visual images of *Journey Into Life* that reveal that implicit theologies do not just appear from nowhere but that these theologies 'do themselves, come from somewhere'.⁵⁴ Seeking to understand that 'somewhere' has required an attentive listening to the voices and discourse surrounding the practices of participants that expose, carry and embody an evangelical theology. It is this methodological approach that has provided some rich and new theological data, as it has been discovered in the living tradition of evangelicals embodied in the practices expressed in and through the discourse

⁵³ Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Methods* (London: Sage, 2001), p. 146.

⁵⁴ Cameron and others p. 53.

that surrounds the distribution and reception of this article of faith. *Journey Into Life* is not just an artefact, it is a theological artefact with practices and processes that open up a theological discourse, making theology integral to what it is. *Journey Into Life* is not just an artefact to reflect on, it is a theological article to reflect on theologically.

Theological Mapping

To provide normative reference points with the capability to identify and locate these embedded operant 'theologies' within the discourse surrounding the use of *Journey Into Life*, a heuristic model was developed to enable a theological mapping of the data.⁵⁵ Using three influential formal voices from twentieth-century evangelical systematic theology this heuristic model enabled the theological data in the espoused and operant theology to be identified, mapped and analysed in relation to recognised normative voices of twentieth-century evangelical theology. Through comparative analysis of the data with this heuristic model three major theological reference points were identified within the data in the distinctive soteriology, pneumatology and missiology of the evangelical 'Argo'. These reference points enabled a process of theological triangulation that provided an incisive tool in identifying and mapping the unique combination of this specific twentieth-century evangelical normative theology within the data set. This concise theological analysis also provided the normative theological map that facilitated theological engagement with contemporary practice, enabling both a theological and practical engagement with current trends and practices in evangelism.

Qualitative Research Interviews

Journey Into Life was a mid to late twentieth-century phenomena and as such the research process, whilst engaging with the lived religion of the participants, was not a piece of 'traditional' anthropological ethnography in terms of physically inhabiting a culture in the same way as Malinowski in Melanesia or

⁵⁵ For a full and detailed explanation of this method see the explanation of Normative Evangelical Theology in chapter nine.

Geertz in Java.⁵⁶ Conventional ethnographic participant observation seemed at first sight to be problematic as this was a retrospective study, however, as already indicated in the reflexivity section of this thesis,⁵⁷ the researcher inhabited this culture positioned as the 'insider' rather than the 'outsider' of classic cultural anthropological study. This research is still, nonetheless, a study of a particular cultural group, but rather than seeking to understand its culture through geographic residency, it seeks to inhabit an historical residency, involving interviews and oral history, as well as using material culture methods and theory to examine the artefacts of that culture of which *Journey Into Life* is a significant example.

A Narrative Method

The initial research was conceived as a narrative project with participants being asked to write out their personal story of how they came into contact with the tract *Journey Into Life* and how it impacted their lives. It was envisaged that these life stories would then be brought into the wider narrative surrounding the production and text of the tract. This approach to the narrative method came under increasing criticism when presented in peer group discussions. The consensus in peer review⁵⁸ was that narratives derived from interviews would produce a richer data set in two ways. Firstly, the semi-structured interview offered a more dynamic two-way process of discovery as well as the opportunity to co-create meaning with respondents. Secondly, there were concerns about any interference to the authentic voice that might affect these narratives in the form of the evangelical practice of speaking and writing testimonies. Members of evangelical churches had been encouraged to write out their testimonies as part of the process of training in evangelism,⁵⁹ and it became increasingly apparent that written research narratives may become unduly influenced by this formulaic

⁵⁶ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

⁵⁷ See chapter 1

⁵⁸ Particularly following the presentation of this methodology at the British Sociological Association Sociology of Religion Study Group conference. Durham University, April 2013.

⁵⁹ D. James Kennedy, *Evangelism Explosion* (London: Coverdale House Publications, 1970), pp. 81-88. This popular course offered a structured and systematic approach to preparing and presenting personal testimony including writing it out.

learned approach to giving a correct evangelical testimony. Through the interview data this research was looking to uncover and understand more, not only about the tract, but about the *habitus* that provided the ‘conscious and unconscious codes and protocols that shape practice [...] by which a world is built and made to cohere’.⁶⁰ Interviews provided an appropriate method to explore the way in which this practice of sharing the gospel had served to orchestrate the evangelical *habitus*, providing this community with a consensus about its core beliefs and a sense of security⁶¹ in an often confusing and complex matrix of competing theological ideas.⁶²

A Critical Approach to Interviews

Semi-structured interviews of the kind used in this piece of research not only enable researchers to hear peoples’ stories, but also to ask some more penetrating questions that may not have been included by respondents in a participant authored narrative study. The issue of ‘learning how to ask’ had implications in terms of how to conduct professional research interviews. As Briggs points out ‘interviewing has become a powerful force in modern society’ and yet, despite this, those engaged in the process of interviewing ‘still know very little about the nature of the interview as a communicative event’.⁶³ His caution was rooted in his observation that ‘because the interview is an accepted speech event in our own native speech communities, we take for granted that we know what it is and what it produces’.⁶⁴ Mindful of this caution and being aware of the interview as ‘most unusual as communicative routines go’⁶⁵ it was important to avoid basing the interview strategy on false epistemological or ethical assumptions. Consideration of who held the hermeneutical priority within the interview process, the artefact, the participant, or the interviewer, raised

⁶⁰ Morgan, p. 203.

⁶¹ Bauman, pp. 1-6. Explores the idea of ‘community’ as groups of people seeking safety and a sense of security in an insecure world.

⁶² Morgan, p. 206.

⁶³ Charles L. Briggs, *Learning How to Ask: A Sociolinguistic Appraisal of the Role of the Interview in Social Science Research* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 1-2.

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 2.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

two significant ethical and epistemological problems. A thematic analysis approach that looked at the themes already residing within the data, raised an epistemological problem because of the assumption that somehow those themes were there hidden in the interview text, whereas a categorical analysis approach posed ethical problems because of the researcher's imposition of categories onto the data. In this categorical approach the researcher took hermeneutical priority, whereas in the thematic approach hermeneutical priority was given to the interviewee. A way through this was found in the sustained recognition of the complex interplay in the hermeneutical priority between the interviewer and the interviewee in the co-creation of meaning. This avoided the false assumption that Briggs identified as stemming from the way that researchers mistake 'what is said as a reflection of what is *out there* rather than as an interpretation which is jointly produced by the interviewer and respondent'.⁶⁶ In understanding the nature of the interview as a communicative event it was decided to follow the lead of Briggs in not abandoning the interview altogether, but instead to emphasise the 'creative possibilities' within the interview process, combined with a critical awareness of the potential 'basic methodological and theoretical problems'⁶⁷ and conclude that a semi-structured interview was the most appropriate approach to data collection in the context of this particular piece of research.

Creative Interviews

The research has therefore been sensitive to the creative and dynamic communication that occurs between the researcher and the researched as the interviewee is being drawn into the process of creating meaning through questions and dialogue. The underlying constructivist epistemology in this research has been open to the idea of generating findings that are 'literally created as the investigation proceeds'.⁶⁸ Within the interview process, there was recognition of synergy and a sense of finding meaning together through the

⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 4.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Lincoln and Guba, p. 111.

shared dialogical experience, with the research process becoming one of exploration and discovery rather than a reduction of meaning. Subjective meanings have been taken seriously and explored, through attentive listening and dialogical engagement with oral testimonies, in order to see how culture and experience has shaped and influenced the construction of a person's perception of reality, particularly in relation to the appropriation of faith.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The method employed to achieve these creative interviews was a semi-structured approach that used pre-prepared questions as a template for the interview in parallel with appropriate conversational prompts and probes. The following questions were developed:

1. How did you first encounter *Journey Into Life*?
2. What was it about the booklet that made an impression on you?
3. How do you think it affected you?
4. Would you say it brought you to faith and if so how?
5. What do you think were the short and longer term effects of the booklet on your life and faith?
6. Have you ever used the booklet to help other people find faith?
7. Looking back how do you know what was going on in your response to this booklet?
8. Are you glad that you read this book and if so why?
9. Do you think that your life has been better for it?
10. Do you think that it still 'works' today? Why/why not?
11. Do you remember seeing *Journey Into Life* in Churches and if so which version, do you remember?
12. Why do you think that *Journey Into Life* was so successful?

The Pilot Interview

Following the suggestion of Gillham in his work on interview techniques, the above noted questions were piloted on a research group to see if they made sense, then having clarified and improved them they were then taken to the pilot interview.⁶⁹ The pilot interview transcript showed that the questions worked well in the live interview situation. The pre-prepared questions provided a good framework whilst not preventing the interviewee from being able to speak freely. The pilot interview transcript demonstrated the importance of prompts and cues, but also the importance of not saying too much or giving too many verbal cues as an interviewer. Through dealing with the same subject matter and the same set of basic questions it became clear that, because of the unique nature of each person's story, the semi-structured interviews needed to have an openness to apparent digressions or subject matter that did not seem to be immediately relevant. In the pilot interview, what emerged was a wider picture of the interviewee in terms of overall world-view and 'take' on what could be described as 'the spiritual'.

Pre-Interview and Post-Interview Reflection

Time for reflection both pre-interview and post-interview were important factors in the process of data collection and analysis. This insight was reinforced following pilot interviews particularly in the post interview phase of the process. Time to reflect and the opportunity to write down thoughts and ideas brought up during the interview were an important aspect of the interview process. The post-interview reflection and notes made during this time formed an important part of the interview process and enabled contextual information to be recorded. Practically this meant scheduling in time both before and after the interview so that the whole experience was not rushed or hurried. This also had the benefit of making the interview more relaxed and less stressed than when conducted within a very tight time constraint.

⁶⁹ Bill Gillham, *The Research Interview* (London: Continuum, 2000), p. 45.

The Dynamics of Informed Consent

The process of signing the informed consent forms tended to formalise the interview process and it was noticed that in explaining and signing the ethical consent forms the interview changed gear, moving from a friendly chat to a more business-like feel. This did not come out in the transcripts, as recording began after the consent forms were signed. People recognised that the interview was a formal process and that this was different from previous more informal discussion. The consent process, necessary from the point of view of professional ethics, did have the effect of formalising what could have been a more relaxed and open conversational process. As Rubin and Rubin point out:

Interviews work best if you and your conversation partner are in a small room, maybe sipping coffee while quietly discussing an event or exploring some aspect of a culture.⁷⁰

It was therefore decided to approach the interviews in a conversational and relaxed manner so that the participants felt that it was like an ordinary conversation. As Rubin and Rubin observed:

Although qualitative interviews are more focused, deeper and more detailed than normal discussions, they follow many of the rules of ordinary conversation including pauses, silence and listening.⁷¹

This insight certainly proved true, as can be seen in the data which follows below.

Interviewee Control

Wengraf emphasizes the importance of letting the interviewee talk about their own world in their own terms to find out someone's 'unique personal culture'.⁷²

⁷⁰ Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995), p. 122.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Tom Wengraf, *Qualitative Research Interviewing: Biographic Narrative and Semi-Structured Methods* (London: Sage, 2001).

This is achieved by giving the interviewee control. 'The general idea distinguishing formal from informal interviews is the idea of control'.⁷³ Letting the interviewee take control in the interviews involved asking as few questions as possible, listening attentively, giving feedback and encouraging expansion and explanation, as well as repeating and reflecting the interviewee's answers to promote further disclosure. There was an element of probing that fell outside the set questions with the result that the interviewees needed time to process questions and formulate answers, especially when they were articulating views that had not been previously expressed or aired. It was important not to allow the voice of the interviewer to get in the way of the interviewee's 'impulse to narrate'⁷⁴ and so disrupt or derail what could be an important narrative account. As the narratives in this research were comprised of personal stories and biographical details there was, inherent within the interview process, an element of self-discovery and meaning-making by the interviewee. This was apparent as interviewees recalled their life experience, supporting Riessman's contention that 'interviews are conversations in which both participants/ teller and listener/questioner develop meaning together'.⁷⁵

Post-Interview Notes and Transcription

In the post-interview reflection, and in notes made immediately after the interview, a record was kept of feelings, impressions, and observations of non-verbal communication including general appearance, body posture, gestures, movement, distance, facial expressions, voice and eye contact. Keats highlights the importance of noting any such apparent conflicts between verbal and non-verbal communication. Unlike video interviews these are often neglected and yet non-verbal communication accounts for a significant amount of shared meaning.⁷⁶ One practical approach to capturing this non-verbal data was for the researcher to personally transcribe the interviews as soon as possible after the

⁷³ Mike Agar, *The Professional Stranger* (New York: New York Academic Press, 1980).

⁷⁴ Riessman, p. 54.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 55.

⁷⁶ Daphne M. Keats, *Interviewing: A Practical Guide for Students and Professionals*, (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001), pp. 65-70.

interview, endorsing Gillham who advocates this as a way of providing 'less loss of semantic properties of speech in terms of emphasis, pace and tone'.⁷⁷

Although self-transcription of the interviews was highly time consuming, it proved to be advantageous, as it was in this hard grit of transcription that interpretative categories began to emerge. Transcription became an important preliminary part of the process of data analysis with repeated listening to the interviews, leading to the early emergence of categories and embryonic themes confirming Riessman's view that the task of personal transcription or re-transcription in narrative research, particularly the identification of narrative segments and their representation 'cannot be delegated'.⁷⁸

Geographical Limits

Whilst acknowledging that this tract had a significant life outside of the United Kingdom a decision was taken in the process of research design to limit this study to the United Kingdom. The global reach of this tract and the process of its transmission and communication in cross-cultural mission contexts would be a rewarding study, but early in the research it became clear that this would take the study beyond the external constraints of the research in terms of both time and money.⁷⁹ Whilst disappointing at the time this decision to narrow the focus of the research to the United Kingdom had the unexpectedly positive effect of directing all the attention of the study to the tract's own particular and unique cultural context. This resulted in an intensification of the gaze and focus of research in its contribution to knowledge about the part played by this tract in the development of evangelical identity and its influence on late-twentieth-century ecclesiology in the United Kingdom. This decision to focus exclusively on the United Kingdom also had the unforeseen effect of alerting the researcher to the significance of other outside influences most notably through the increasing

⁷⁷ Gillham, p. 122.

⁷⁸ Riessman, p. 58.

⁷⁹ Particularly in terms of overseas travel for interviews.

‘Americanisation’ of English Christianity,⁸⁰ particularly evangelicalism⁸¹ during this period. This intentional decision helped to keep the focus of the investigation on this distinctively British ecclesial phenomenon of mid-twentieth-century conservative evangelicalism, keeping it within its own unique historically situated and geographically boundaried context.⁸² It reinforced Bevans’ warning about the highly contextual nature of theology and the importance of contextually based analysis in missiological studies.⁸³

Data Analysis Methods

Corbin and Strauss define ‘analysis as the act of giving meaning to data’,⁸⁴ but this deceptively simple task was complicated in this particular piece of research by the dialectical interplay between the artefact, author, reader and interpreter requiring a method where ‘data generation and data analysis developed simultaneously in a dialectical process’.⁸⁵ The simultaneous integration of data generation and data analysis began to take place in the process of listening to the conversations and voices centered around the artefact. This was highlighted in the early stages of interviewing when the importance of physically placing and keeping the object ‘*Journey Into Life*’ on the table maintained its centrality in the process of the co-creation of meaning. Not only were the participants generating data and text but as living human documents they were also facilitating research data analysis through sharing their own reflections on the text and their own analysis of its meaning.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ See chapter 11 – ‘Decisional’. Particularly in the recognition by this research of the influence of American ‘crusade’ evangelism in this period through the evangelistic ministry of Billy Graham.

⁸¹ Ackerley, p. 1. Especially in what he describes as ‘North American pragmatism’.

⁸² McDannell, p. 3. ‘By placing an object in a specific historical context, religious artefacts act as windows onto a particular religious world’.

⁸³ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* Revised and Expanded Edition edn (New York: Orbis Books, 1992), p. 3 & 45. ‘There is no such thing as “theology”; there is only contextual theology’. ‘Contextualisation is not optional; it is a missiological and theological necessity’.

⁸⁴ Corbin J. and Strauss A., *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2008), p. 64.

⁸⁵ Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching* (London: Sage, 2002), p. 180.

⁸⁶ Anton T. Boisen, *The Exploration of the Inner World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), p. 185. ‘I have sought to begin not with the ready-made formulations of books but with the living human documents and with actual social conditions in all their complexity’.

Coding and Categorical Analysis

The identification of codes, categories and themes suggested by Corbin and Strauss provided the method for the analysis of the interview data. As anticipated this was a dynamic and organic process as the researcher with the interview transcripts, 'inhabiting' them and saturating themselves in their content through transcribing them, reading them, re-reading them, listening to them again and again and being able to hear the emerging ideas, key words, and processes that were at work. Serious consideration was given to the possibility of using computer aided qualitative data analysis software. However, the nature of analyzing this type of narrative data was as Merrill and West suggest 'a deeply intuitive, subtle, inter-subjective as well as a challenging process: intellectually, epistemologically and in terms of the researcher's self-knowledge and may defy computerisation'.⁸⁷ It was concluded that on balance data analysis software would not be able to capture the polyvalent and semiotically diverse nature of the narrative data particularly in the arena of non-verbal communication, ambiguities in language, body language, pauses and the subtleties of the discourse in terms of intonation and the like.⁸⁸ The decision was therefore taken that 'the investigator's own style of rigorous empirical thinking, along with sufficient presentation of evidence'⁸⁹ be used in the data analysis process rather than a computer assisted software system.

Hermeneutical Tensions

The movement from codes to categories and the integration into higher level categories or themes raised a significant hermeneutical problem in this analysis of *Journey Into Life*. The process of coding, with its roots in a modernist epistemology, is built on the presupposition that there is 'raw data' to be identified and extracted for the development of categories and themes. The advantage of this type of coding is that it places a significant hermeneutical priority on the data itself as evidenced in the systematic and careful coding used

⁸⁷ Merrill and West, p. 114.

⁸⁸ A decision endorsed by my supervisory team.

⁸⁹ Yin, p. 127.

in much grounded theory. However, for the type of narrative and biographical data analysis in this research, it became more problematic when applied to the analysis of interview transcripts where the hermeneutical priority and power of the researcher was already at work in the interview process itself. Whilst not assuming a fully postmodern stance where the interpreter determines meaning, it was important to note an awareness of the hermeneutical tension and pressure on the interpreter that came with this shift in the hermeneutical priority, as the analytical process moved from codes to categories and into higher level categories and themes.

A Biographical Interpretative Method

The solution to this above noted hermeneutical dilemma has been to use a 'biographical-interpretative method'⁹⁰ that takes into account the continually shifting hermeneutical priority between the interviewee, the researcher, and the 'told life' that is being co-created in the interview process. Rooted in grounded theory this approach encouraged not only a thorough analysis of the interview transcripts in terms of coding, categories and themes, but also the maintenance of an awareness of the relationship between the researcher in terms of personal biography, counter-transference and the researched as co-analysts in the interview process. During the interview process it became increasingly apparent that there was a certain amount of interpretation of the narratives that was being offered by the participants themselves within the interview.

Data Reduction Strategy

In the construction of the 'narratives of encounter' with the booklet *Journey Into Life*, Riessmann's injunction that 'the text is not autonomous of its context',⁹¹ has proved to be particularly pertinent. Each participant's narrative has been reconstructed on the foundation of its identified codes from within the interview transcripts including observations from researcher field notes. Emergent

⁹⁰ Prue Chamberlayne, Joanna Bornat, and Tom Wengraf, 'The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science: Comparative Issues and Examples', (London: Routledge, 2000).

⁹¹ Riessman, p. 21.

categories have been presented within a re-transcription in the form of a concise summary narrative being attentive to the overall way the participant story has been told. This strategy was designed to avoid the fragmentation and fracture that can occur when the analysis takes bits and pieces of the discourse out and thus ignores the important 'sequential and structural features that characterize narrative accounts'.⁹² This 'biographical-interpretative' method balances the atomising effect of breaking down the narrative by keeping in mind the participants' whole life story in order to make sense of the constituent parts, and provides a form of hermeneutical control and feedback into the process of interpretation. This data reduction strategy of using concise narrative summaries enabled a logical and coherent collation of categorical data into five central research themes for further analysis in what follows below.⁹³ In this synthesis of categories into core research themes, the researcher was mindful of Briggs's critique that: 'The single most serious shortcoming relating to the use of interviews in the social science would certainly be the commonsensical, unreflexive manner in which most analysis of data from interview is conducted'.⁹⁴ In order to provide safeguarding against this potential weakness, the researcher incorporated Charmaz's criteria of credibility, originality, resonance and usefulness for the evaluation providing an important control in the development of the five core research themes.⁹⁵

Summary of Research Methodology

This chapter has outlined the specific empirical qualitative research methodology developed to investigate the impact, afterlife and history of effects of this defining article of faith in the lived religion of evangelical Christians in the United Kingdom. The presentation of this multi-method theological and qualitative social research methodology began with an examination of the epistemological and ethical foundations that have underpinned the design and execution of this

⁹² Ibid. p. 3.

⁹³ Appendix 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the collation process from categories into main research themes.

⁹⁴ Briggs, p. 102.

⁹⁵ Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, (London: Sage, 2006), pp. 182-3.

research. A multi-method approach was specifically chosen for this research of *Journey Into Life* as key qualitative social science research methods were brought together with practical theology to create a multiple-method research design capable of exploring the complexity of this small religious tract. This chapter outlined and explained the decisions that were taken in the research design process that brought together the qualitative methods of a case study, material culture theory, gift exchange theory, semi-structured interviews, narrative analysis and qualitative data analysis methods, with the disciplines of practical theology in theological observation and reflection, theological discourse analysis, ordinary theology and systematic theological mapping. The application of this methodology in the collection of research data from fieldwork through semi-structured interviews and the subsequent social and theological analysis of this data, forms the substance of the following chapters.

Chapter Three - Research Interview Data

The following chapter presents twelve narratives of encounter with the booklet *Journey Into Life*.¹ Each of these participant life narratives has been constructed using interview data and field notes as well as relevant biographical information that briefly sets each story within its own particular and unique context.² Having presented these *Journey Into Life* narratives this chapter concludes by identifying and introducing five central emergent research themes for further analysis.³

Twelve Narratives of Encounter

Narrative One – Wells: 'The whole gospel was sequenced'.⁴

Wells gave this interview in his office above the high street café of a large Anglican evangelical community church where he serves as the vicar. Now in his mid-fifties and some thirty years after what he sees as his conversion experience, he described his encounter with *Journey Into Life* as the most 'important thing' in his life. Producing his treasured original 1980 copy of *Journey Into Life* from the top drawer of his desk Wells explained how this small booklet had been given to him by his girlfriend in his last year at University. He remembered how the simple pictures had permeated deeply into him. He particularly remembered the image of the door as being something that he felt he personally had to walk through. The picture of sin as a cloud made a lot of sense to him at the time as did the two pictures of the cross and the weeds which conveyed to him the idea of the way sin spreads, spoils, and separates. Having been brought up in a

¹ The names of participants have been changed to protect their anonymity as outlined in research ethics section of methodology chapter.

² In accordance with the biographical-interpretative method these narratives have been constructed to avoid [as much as possible] the de-contextualisation of codes. See methodology chapter for more details of the narrative method and data reduction strategy. Also Riessman, pp. 54-70.

³ Appendix 1, 2 & 3 provide a detailed breakdown of the collation process from codes into categories and then into main research themes.

⁴ Hugo Wells, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2012).

Christian home he knew the gospel story and the stories of Jesus but what he found in *Journey Into Life* were the things that he already knew being presented both simply and systematically. He thought that its effectiveness for him was rooted in the way that this was the first time he had seen the whole gospel in the form of a sequenced presentation. He recalled that the text was a progression for him in terms of his overall understanding but the pictures had been critical in his reception of the booklet's overall message. In his treasured original 1980 copy of *Journey Into Life* the road sign on the front had given him a sense of choice as well as a chance to respond. This response was not immediate and came after several months of repeatedly reading the book. Wells remembered that he went to his bedroom, knelt down and prayed the prayer at the back of the booklet. He felt that making the decision was important and he recalled that it was followed by a tangible spiritual experience of supernatural tingling in his body just below his sternum. Wells recalled that as he finished the prayer he knew something had happened and he summarised the experience as follows:

It made sense, it all fitted together, I went to my room, closed the door, I read the book on my bed, I made a decision. I can see myself kneeling and praying, humbly accepting Christ, there was an experience of tingling.

Wells said that this was the most 'pivotal point' in his life recalling that even his mother noticed a real difference in him particularly in terms of changed behaviour. He remembered that he followed the booklet's instructions and began to learn to pray, read the Bible and joined a church, as well as attending the university Christian Union. Wells said that he was left with a deep attachment to the booklet's simplicity and as a Christian speaker he still finds that it works. He said that for him it is a very natural thing to use the book and to this day he usually carries two or three copies in his pocket to give away.

Narrative Two – Kerr: 'It enabled me to make that decision'.⁵

Kerr works as a senior administrator on the staff of a Cathedral. In her mid-fifties she reports that her faith is central to her work and her life, but this has not

⁵ Carol Kerr, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).

always been the case. In her early thirties Kerr attended what she described as a 'very evangelical' non-denominational mission Church. It was here that she was given the booklet *Journey Into Life* to read through. Having taken the tract home she read it but struggled with it. She recalled that her struggle revolved around the things she was doing that she did not want to give up. Her reading of *Journey Into Life* was that it demanded change and a complete turn-around as well as an acknowledgement that what she was doing was wrong. She said that she did not want to say the prayer until she had made the decision to end what she was doing. She recalled:

I was on my own, I lived on my own and didn't want to do it with anybody else. So I read it, prayed the prayer and gave my life to Jesus completely on my own. I've never forgotten it, I can remember, I can see myself doing it and how I felt, I decided that evening, that's what I needed to do. I know the date, I felt revived and things started changing.

Kerr described the booklet as 'a tool' that enabled her to take this step of faith. She said:

You are being called to do something and I think that sometimes in churches that bit's not actually made clear. It's very easy to read and it says it like it is, it's not complicated just very easy and explains it simply and as it is.

Kerr pointed out that her decision was not a group thing and it was very important to her at that time for her to make that decision on her own. She said:

I did it on my own as I had to do things on my own, and it was a very personal, very individual kind of thing. I think it enabled me [you know, at the crossroads] to make that decision, and it enabled me to make that choice in the way that was best for me.

Kerr said how grateful she had been to have something that she could 'physically hold onto' because having said the prayer it gave her something tangible to keep hold of. At the end of the interview Kerr said that it's been good to talk about it, and to think about it and to remember. Kerr said that as she talked about her experience and remembered how special it was, it still gave her a 'wow' feeling.

Narrative Three – Chester: 'But it's still the Gospel, isn't it?'⁶

Chester was given *Journey Into life* by a school friend when she was thirteen years old. It was given to her at a point in her life where she had rejected and left behind her childhood faith. *Journey Into life* started a process of rethinking her childhood faith and she remembered wondering why nobody had ever explained the gospel in this way before. Her friend introduced her to an evangelical church youth group who then 'discipled' her. Chester recalled that this had a big impact on her as 'it all made sense'. As she said:

The penny dropped with God taking it at just the right time so that it just clicked into place. It was just me reading the booklet in my bedroom. I can remember it all, these pictures, about sin separating, the coins with the justice and love, particularly the coin, the cloud and the signs, God's way, it sort of went fast, click, click, click.

She explained her understanding of this as the Holy Spirit speaking to her through it with God calling her and bringing her back to Him. She recalled that it changed her life completely because having prayed the prayer at the end of the book:

He was there and that was it. God's presence was there. Jesus was there.

She wrote in her diary at the time:

Today I have become a Christian.

Chester said that the biggest thing for her was the decision, particularly the awareness that it was a life changing one. She recalled:

I was giving my life to Jesus for him to take me wherever he wanted me to go, so it was a decision not just for now.

She said that it was a radical discipleship decision to be a follower and not just a nice person. She recalled that the immediate effect of this was that:

⁶ Carrie Chester, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).

I wanted people to get it like I'd got it. I wanted people to realise for themselves how much Jesus loved them. I wanted to go and work as an evangelist.

Following her decision Chester immediately gave *Journey Into Life* to her parents and expected them to experience the same thing. She remembered that it did not work in the same way for her parents who were alarmed and thought that she had joined a cult. Chester went on to be an evangelist working on the streets of Newcastle with Youth for Christ. She said:

I was bringing people to Jesus. Talking to people about my faith and using *Journey Into Life*.

Thirty years later Chester found herself studying theology and ministry at university in preparation for ordination and it was out of this context of renewed theological reflection that she posed an important question. In the course of the interview she said: 'but it's still the gospel isn't it?' This was obviously a significant question for her [and it is one that is taken up in the following research analysis]. Chester was being challenged in her theological reflection during her training as she was seeking to make sense of her very real childhood faith where she remembered that she had known Jesus with her. She was trying to reconcile her childhood memories of singing every night to Jesus with her experiences of praying the prayer in *Journey Into Life* and her subsequent experience of God. Despite these questions the interview concluded with a reaffirmation of the positive impact of the tract when she said:

I love to tell people that *Journey Into life* was such a big impact on me, cos [sic] I prayed and he was there and this was it, God's presence, Jesus was there.

Narrative Four – Hurst: 'It has a really strong sense of authority'.⁷

⁷ Dave Hurst, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2014).

Hurst has recently taken over the leadership of a large suburban Anglican evangelical church but his *Journey Into Life* story began in 1976 when, at the age of eleven he attended a Scripture Union Christian camp in Northern Ireland. Reflecting on this experience he said that these camps almost felt as if we were in 'a kind of pipeline or conveyor belt' with annual follow up house parties. His first memory of *Journey Into Life* was of a quite interesting booklet with some pictures in it. Significantly he distinctly remembered 'the green cover with the sort of road sign turning going one way [then] going the other'. At the camp Hurst recalled that rather than being handed a Bible, participants were handed *Journey Into Life* as the tool to try to help them to understand how to become a Christian. He remembered the booklet 'just sitting there' during the week and then being handed out particularly during evening conversations with leaders in the dormitory. Reflecting on this experience Hurst remembered *Journey Into Life* as the pattern that was followed by the whole camp with the expectation that everyone must be given one especially if they had made a profession of faith. As an eleven-year-old boy Hurst found the booklet's simplicity and comprehensive approach to be one that he could understand and his assimilation of its content was aided by dormitory discussions where Hurst was led through *Journey Into Life* by a senior leader. He said the biggest effect it had on him was to make him understand that he had to make a decision about whether to follow Christ or not. However the booklet also made it clear that it was not just something that would happen by accident and he realised he had to pray the prayer. He recalled:

It was explained that you can't get to heaven on your own and that we've got a choice to make in our lives. There was a prayer at the end which we said together and the leader said this is wonderful you know you've become a Christian. It was the clearest time in my [sort of] early life when I made a full commitment to say yes I want to accept Christ into my life, so that book for me was very special.

Hurst commented that he now realised he had made a decision on that day which would change his life because his life would no longer be his own as it would be in God's hands. He said:

From this point on I then took on board a very particular understanding of what it meant to be a Christian based on that book. It was a very clear theological standpoint and I probably thought this is what every Christian believes because *Journey Into Life* explains exactly what the Bible says about what it means to be a Christian and therefore there can't be any other way of thinking about what it means to be a Christian.

He reflected that although he can now see that this is not what every Christian necessarily believes, *Journey Into Life* had a really strong sense of authority in his life in terms of what he believes a Christian is. He said:

It had a much bigger influence on the way I thought about life and the Christian journey than I perhaps gave it credit for at the time. I would go back to this in times of uncertainty and doubt to say hang on a minute what does a Christian believe about this? Oh, yeah judgement or sin or the cross or what Jesus did. This was how I found faith and I'm sure it's had a key impact on my faith for most of my life.

Thirty years later Hurst found himself working alongside the author of *Journey Into Life*, visiting families who were enquiring about having their children baptised in an Anglican parish. Hurst recalled that Norman Warren was passionate that 'this stuff really works' and he told Hurst that if you explain the gospel to them you will see them becoming Christians. Hurst said that this seemed to be true for Warren whom he described as having a gift of evangelism, although Warren's explanation was that it works 'because it's the gospel'. Hurst observed that Warren went to people's homes and those people became Christians. Through working with Warren he gained a unique insight into the author's own practice observing that:

The book is Norman's complete understanding of everything you have to do to understand the Christian faith [he] totally believed it.

Hurst's own experience of handing out the booklet was very different from that of its author. He recalled one instance on a visit to a home in his parish where he gave the booklet to a person who having read it said:

It's just awful – it's an awful book [...] it's just not at all what I believe about God or about the Christian faith.

Hurst was quite thrown by this and left facing up to the question of whether rejecting the booklet could be equated to 'rejecting the Christian faith?' Despite this experience he felt that there will be people who will respond to it and looking back there was probably nothing else quite like that in the time when he became a Christian, at least nothing quite as comprehensive. He said:

At that time, I think it was probably quite radical, quite ground breaking, quite unique. It shaped my early understanding of what the Christian faith was all about and gave me quite a solid foundation for an evangelical faith. It was the best tool for ten and eleven-year-olds.

He recalled that in the 1980s *Journey Into Life* was 'all over the churches' in Northern Ireland with some having piles of them at the back at the church.

Narrative Five – Wood: 'My epiphany came through this'.⁸

Wood is an international and professional evangelist who runs his own evangelistic ministry. He first encountered *Journey Into Life* through a fellow college student who met with him to do one-to-one bible study as well as taking him to a vibrant youth group at Christ Church, in the London suburb of North Finchley. Wood recalled:

I'd done some bible study, I heard some speakers and I am sure all of it was part of a process but my epiphany came through this [the booklet]. I'd listen, I was intrigued and I was interested and then Andy gave me *Journey Into Life* which was the tipping point, the thing that enabled that door to open.

Wood was able to specify the exact date and time when he first responded to the message of *Journey Into Life*. He recalled that at 10 o'clock on 9th February 1975 he sat down with his friend Andy so that they could read *Journey Into Life* together. Using the analogy of the door opening [linked with Revelation 3.20] his friend asked Wood if he could hear Jesus knocking at the door? Wood remembered saying 'I don't know where the door is?' His friend Andy told him not to worry about the location of the door and suggested that he should ask

⁸ James Wood, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2014).

Jesus to break the door down. So Wood asked Jesus to break the door down and as he recalled 'it was at this point that a light came on, my mind was illuminated, my heart was moved' and he spoke in tongues. Reflecting on this Wood commented:

It's such a short prayer isn't it? And yet that is when the light came on and I understood it.

Although having been brought up in a Greek Orthodox family, Wood admits that despite his traditional religious background he understood hardly anything before he took this step of opening the door. He said:

I believe it's the Spirit that gives us understanding. I did read the whole booklet and had a bit of understanding and I think that was when the light came on and I understood.

Wood questioned how much you really have to believe all this to open the door? He pointed out that the thief on the cross 'got in' on one sentence and the woman with the issue of blood reached out to touch the hem of the garment and that was enough. He felt there is a limit to how much we can fully understand and comprehend of God without his spirit in us. He recalled that the effects of his own experience were immediate. He said:

I woke up on February 10th [1975] and I knew I was a Christian, I knew totally and I went to college and went to a lecture, I sat next to Richard and I said Richard I became a Christian last night. So then I got *Journey Into Life* out, I said Richard it's really important, really important and during the lecture we went through the booklet. And I said Richard say this prayer, you've got to say this prayer which he did. So then all three of us went to the student union to register the new Christian Union Society and Andy became president, Richard became treasurer and I was the secretary.

Wood said that soon after this he led another person to the Lord and from this point onwards he spent a lot of time just introducing people to Jesus and giving out *Journey Into Life*. Reflecting on the booklet in his current role as a professional evangelist Wood continues to see *Journey Into Life* as a significant link in the chain with people serving Jesus as a result of responding to it. He

recalled how *Journey Into Life* was used extensively and effectively in his University missions. As a tract writer himself Wood continues to believe that people need something in their hands but he also recognises the challenge of distilling the gospel. With his appreciation of *Journey Into Life's* combination of text and visuals as well as its minimalistic style he said that this approach is so simple and despite being 'kind of old' it still works in getting people connected.

Narrative Six – May: 'The basis of my Christian belief'.⁹

May worked as a General Practitioner until his late forties when he retrained as a priest in the Church of England where he now serves as a rural vicar in charge of seven churches. He was introduced to *Journey Into Life* whilst on a Scripture Union Camp in 1970 when he was eleven years old. The pictures, particularly the cloud of sin blocking the sunlight of God with Jesus clearing the barrier of sin and obtaining a restored relationship made a huge amount of sense to him at the time. He recalled that the whole content resonated especially the diagram on the front with its choice of direction as he felt that he wanted his direction to be God. May said that the booklet's succinct and simple explanation of the gospel enabled him for the first time to access what the Christian faith was about and following a conscious decision he prayed the prayer of Commitment to Christ from the booklet. He felt that he had connected and that his faith was now real. He said that his prayer was accompanied by a 'profound experience' of the Holy Spirit. At interview May produced his stained but original copy of *Journey Into Life*, stating that he had been glad the booklet was still there as it was reassuring to see it around and being used. He said that it had 'stayed' with him and he felt an emotional sadness when the booklet was eventually superseded. He felt that *Journey Into Life* had given him access to what Christian faith is all about with the core of the Christian faith in it. May had continued to use the booklet on Christian camps that he has run and still has confidence in it to get people connected with God.

⁹ Stuart May, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).

Narrative Seven – Ford: 'Keep this on the table'.¹⁰

Ford is a former telephone engineer who was ordained in the Anglican church to work as a professional evangelist. Now in his mid-fifties he serves as a teacher and trainer in evangelism on a diocesan staff team where he works in enabling evangelism at a local level. Ford attended a church youth group having been invited there by a young woman who later became his wife. Three different people gave him a copy of *Journey Into life* on three separate occasions. He recalled that *Journey Into Life* was good to read through and to think about. He said:

I studied it and yeah that's the Christian faith, nice. It was 'the' tract at the time and it made sense with the ABC and D.

Ford said that *Journey Into Life* functioned like a course and was the tool that God used to teach him about 'who God is, what sin is and why Christ died' for him. It was through *Journey Into Life* that God communicated the gospel message to Ford and it was also through this booklet that he understood the challenge to do something. Reading *Journey Into Life* he realised that he had to commit his life to God with this prayer. Up to this point he remembered:

I didn't feel 'in' but I thought that if I pray the prayer I'm in Christ not outside but inside. It was a now moment, now or never, letting him in or keeping him out.

He asked God in prayer if he was real and he recalled [like it was yesterday] that he could see Jesus in a 'sort of vision'. He described that encounter as 'God being there, God loving me, God hearing my prayers', and he remembered that it was at this point that he 'let go' emotionally and encountered Jesus. For this twenty-two-year-old Telecom engineer life changed dramatically, as he said 'I stopped nicking stuff' and he became the unofficial chaplain to his colleagues. Ford kept using *Journey Into Life* and said in the interview that it was important that we 'keep this on the table'. Pointing to it, he identified his understanding of it

¹⁰ David Ford, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).

saying, 'that's a full-blown tract'. He said that he would like it to work today but recognised it as being 'not PC' as it mentions sin and hell. Despite these reservations he admitted that 'I've got an emotional attachment to this'.

Narrative Eight – King: 'I recognise it immediately'.¹¹

King is a Professor of Religious Education working with students from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Now in his mid-fifties King remembered *Journey Into Life* being around in the family home in the late 1960s and early 1970s. At 'Crusader' camp when he was about 11 years old he remembers having the booklet, reading it and it making sense. King found himself resisting what it was telling him as he tried to reconcile the 'thrust of the whole thing pushing towards a decision' when he felt that he had always been a Christian. He was therefore aware of a conflict within himself because he felt deeply convinced that he was saying something he did not believe in. He thought he had always been a Christian and had therefore been resisting what he had later come to refer to as 'the evangelical act of faith'. Having prayed the prayer in the booklet on his own and in private he did not think it made any difference because he 'always prayed and prayed all the time'. However, through his teenage years *Journey Into Life* became part of the theological 'paraphernalia' next to King's bedside. He recalled that it was an important step on his theological journey in helping him to think theologically. Whilst recognising that it may have not been the function that *Journey Into Life* was intended for it was the first time he had seen doctrine articulated clearly on the page and it provided him with the systematic theology that he was looking for. He felt that it 'kind of shaped' him providing a catalyst for a systematic reflection on his journey in a way that was more than just theology. In terms of its authority over his subsequent life, King reflected that there was something in it that he has 'never departed from', and he still had a sense of *Journey Into Life* being 'the core'. Even after a lifetime spent in academic theological and educational research King recognised that

¹¹ Andrew King, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).

Journey Into Life was still exercising an influence on his belief system. Indeed he described it as 'seminal'. He said that it was an important part of the 'little theological library' that was 'emerging' and which ultimately became the foundation of his life's work. King has continued to share his evangelical gospel motivation stemming from the great commission of Christ and articulated an important insight into the role that *Journey Into Life* has continued to have in his work. He explained that the tract acted as a catalyst for his theological questioning and it was this act and practice of 'systematic reflecting on something' that had so impacted him. Following this experience, he was now handing on this practice of 'systematic reflecting' in his work as a professor of religious studies. Whilst he felt that handing out *Journey Into Life* was not something that he could do he did feel able to 'tell that story' and he valued the opportunity he has to enable his students to hear the Christian story.¹²

Narrative Nine – Clements: 'It still remains an important part of me'.¹³

Clements is in his mid-fifties and is a Bishop in the Church of England. At the time of interview he was an Archdeacon with responsibility for a significant number of Anglican Churches, of which many were located in areas of considerable social deprivation. Clements was brought up in a Methodist home and recalled that he had received 'a basic grounding in the gospel through Sunday school'. In his late-teens Clements' brother who had been working at university with 'the Navigators' gave him a copy of *Journey into Life* and told him that he 'had to do something about this'. *Journey Into Life* provided a simple tool that Clements described as a 'good distillation of the gospel, just clear, uncluttered and intelligible'. He remembered that he understood the language and 'what was going on' in the booklets very linear, logical, rational and modern approach. He held onto it for a little while before he actually did anything about it because he understood the significance of what he was being asked to do in terms of

¹² Kings' emphasis on the story endorsed Walker's thesis from the gospel, culture and mission movement that focused on 'telling the gospel story as mission'. Andrew Walker, *Telling the Story: Gospel, Mission and Culture* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1996), p. 6.

¹³ Peter Clements, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).

‘making himself right with God’. He recalled that ‘it was a very low-key private act’ made in the privacy of his own bedroom whilst kneeling down by the side of his bed and praying the prayer on 18th January 1981. He did not realise how ‘dynamite’ praying the prayer was going to be for him and he described it as being like a car bomb underneath him. Immediately things started to happen in Clements’ life and he remembered feeling a calmness as he told his friends about his experience, in a way that was ‘just like sharing news’. Clements described this a ‘pre-theoretical evangelism’ as he had received no instruction or directive about why or how he should share his faith. When he shared this with his friend he remembered that it ‘triggered off’ something that he described as an ‘extraordinarily powerful deep sense of conviction of the presence of God in the room’, such that one of his friends made an immediate commitment of faith. Clements reflected that his ‘conversion came at a really good moment’, indeed at just the right moment for him, as he went up to Cambridge later that year. Clements’ narrative revealed how his own dialogical approach to evangelistic ministry had developed from this early experience with *Journey Into Life*, and how as a very early pioneer of the internet through blogging and hosting a website, he had found himself in dialogue with diverse communities who were open and wanting to engage in conversation about anything including faith. Even today Clements says that *Journey Into Life* still remains ‘an important part’ of him that is ‘always in the heart’ and he is eternally grateful for ‘the stuff that’s in here’.

Narrative Ten – Dench: ‘a catalyst in my faith decision’.¹⁴

Dench is in his late-fifties and is a vicar in charge of five rural churches. His first encounter with *Journey Into Life* came in 1987 during a visit from the local vicar as part of baptism preparation for his new baby. Although not part of his particular working-class tradition Christianity was ‘there in the background’ through the influence of an evangelical Sunday school, boys brigade and the church youth club. He recalled that these Church influences were ‘all in the same

¹⁴ Adam Dench, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).

camp as Norman', so when he first read the booklet he remembered that he already knew all the answers to the questions. The black and white nature of the booklet was important acting as a 'catalyst' in his thinking. Not being a visual person the words brought him a clarity that 'crystalised' and articulated the teaching in his 'head'. Dench recalled that the difficult but critical thing for him was to make a decision but he was frightened about praying the prayer because he knew it would change his life forever and there would be no going back. For Dench the prayer was pivotal and powerful as after having prayed it, 'word for word' he felt released, with warmth washing over him and flowing through him. Following this spiritual experience of peace, he told other people and gave copies of the booklet away. Reflecting on *Journey Into Life* Dench continues to have 'a fondness for it' and he expressed the view that 'it really does contain in a nutshell the evangelical perspective of what it means to have faith'. He concluded that it transformed his life and felt that it could work today especially amongst 'black and white thinkers' because it still resonates.

Narrative Eleven– Herne: 'simple and easy to understand'.¹⁵

Herne is in her mid-fifties and is married to a vicar in the Church of England. She works full-time in the church running informal teaching and self-help groups. Herne first encountered *Journey Into Life* in 1976 when she was given a copy following a concert at her school by a Christian singer called Dave Pope. Herne found the booklet to be clear, simple, bold and easy to understand. Following an initial decision and prayer at the concert she embarked on what she described as 'a nine-month spiritual journey of enlightenment', which she felt involved a three-fold process of warming to Jesus, clarifying her understanding and developing a theological framework. Repeatedly reading *Journey Into Life* on her own for nine months she felt that it had 'carried a message and clarified her understanding of the gospel'. Herne found that the illustrations made sense and carried an obvious meaning for her particularly in relation to how Jesus's death

¹⁵ Anne Herne, 'Journey into Life Research Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).

could save her and as she had reflected on this she found herself 'warming to Jesus'. Looking back she thought that not only did the booklet provide her with a good basic theological framework it also gave her direction for her spiritual journey. Herne saw her engagement with *Journey Into Life* as a process that took time. She remembered it as a time of developing spiritual enlightenment through increasing understanding and recalled that the 'booklets instructions' had helped her in her journey. She clearly remembered the booklet being around and routinely handed out in churches in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Narrative Twelve – Brown: 'It's all utter bollocks'.¹⁶

A large and former council estate on the outskirts of London was the contemporary context from which Brown gave her research narrative, a story rooted in the dual context of serious physical disability and poverty that offered a provocative and dissident voice amongst the research participants. Brown's interview brought her *Journey Into Life* narrative into dialogue with a particularly complicated mix of contextual, social and theological variables. Brown's original context in a residential school for 'gifted' and disabled young people had been the site of the original gifting of *Journey Into Life*. The original presentation of the *Journey Into Life* message had not gone well. Brown remembered *Journey into life* as the booklet with the 'little road signs on the front' that had been given to her in her early teens whilst resident at a special school for 'bright' young people with Cerebral Palsy. She clearly remembered these 'leaflets being thrust into her hand' at Christian Union meetings in the school. Brown connected the message about the consequences of sin with her own disability and the message that she heard was that everything would be alright if she would just believe in Jesus. However, this seemed a bit hollow to a young teenager confined to a wheelchair, unable to speak and hardly able to do anything for herself. Brown read 'this stuff' to the point where she said she could virtually recite what they were going to say, but she found its 'easy message really painful, really offensive bilge' in its

¹⁶ Carolyn Brown, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).

suggestion that all she needed to do was to repent and 'it would all be fine'. Brown read *Journey Into Life* as saying that she had been 'bad' and that it was all her fault because she was sinful and intrinsically bad. She understood it to be saying that she needed to pray for forgiveness, that Jesus died for her, that he loved her personally and that 'it was all sorted because Jesus loves you right?' The booklet gave her the impression that all she had to do was to believe and that her life would be 'lovely'. But the experience of her life 'still feeling like crap' made her angry and defensive disliking these 'little leaflets', and concluding that 'it was all utter bollocks'. Brown remembered one instance where she 'she took the little leaflet, ripped it up and chucked it on the ground'. She thought that *Journey Into Life* was a bit naïve in its role as a potted digest of how to get faith and even today she has worries about 'the content of some of that stuff'. She said that 'it was written in a dialect I didn't understand,' so her journey to faith was made by another route.

Many years later whilst working as a priest in a deeply working-class housing estate marked by serious social deprivation, Brown developed a different evangelistic paradigm. Her own embodied faith signposted by her clerical collar formed a startling contrast with her broken body and stammering speech. Brown herself has become the tract for as she said, she is herself 'a question mark', because when people stare at her she can see them saying to themselves, 'how does that work?' The question becomes her opportunity and she starts to offer them the gift of hope through encouraging words like 'you matter to God' and 'God thinks you're fantastic', which as she says is a radical message for people who have been continually told that they 'are quite bad and that they are not doing a very good job' [of life]. Brown's approach to evangelism begins by making sure that the people coming to her have food and then she says to them, 'you are doing the best you can and Jesus loves you and you are really important to me, and they go'. Starting from where people are she shows them some empathy and the recognition for where they are, for as she says:

If you are stuck in those flats over there it's very hard to imagine a different way and what faith allows you to do is just to kind of lift your

eyes above the horizon a bit and just say well there might be a better way and actually the mechanism for that is Jesus.

In her experience, she said that evangelism is about the ‘transforming nature of hope and imagination’, thus demonstrating her development of a very different contextualised paradigm for gospel evangelism.

Five Emergent Themes

Following the research data reduction strategy outlined in the previous chapter the categorical data from each of the participant narratives outlined above was collated under five central themes that emerged in the process of transcription and intensive analysis of the interview data.¹⁷ These five themes¹⁸ are now summarised below under the following headings.

Theme One: Given it

This theme is about the context in which all of the research participants were given, handed or, in one case sold *Journey Into Life*. The context of this exchange was that of the evangelical faith community particularly at evangelical camps, youth groups, student Christian Unions, missions as well as evangelical churches and in homes. The site of engagement with this object was not through impersonal tract distribution but through friendships and evangelical community gatherings often engineered for the purpose of presenting the message of this tract. This was the community of interpretation in which *Journey Into Life* first came into meaning and made sense for these young people. Even for those with a basic grounding in the Christian gospel, Christian home, or Sunday school *Journey Into Life* was given and presented typically at times of transition and change with participation offering friendship and incorporation into vibrant evangelical groups and congregations.

¹⁷ See coding and categorical analysis methods in methodology chapter especially the emphasis on ‘inhabiting’ the interview transcripts in the development of themes. See Appendix 1,2 &3 for detailed breakdown of categories into themes.

¹⁸ These themes satisfy Charmaz’s criteria of credibility, originality, resonance and usefulness. See Methodology section on Data Reduction Strategy.

Theme Two: Reading it

This theme developed out of the way that picking up and reading the booklet initiated new thinking, providing a simple, succinct, distilled, minimalistic and visual explanation of the core of the Christian faith. It recognises the way that *Journey Into Life* was understood as a good distillation or crystallisation of the gospel that resonated and connected, being perceived as uncluttered, intelligible, clear, linear, logical and rational. It notes that for these readers *Journey Into Life* made sense of the Christian story, sequencing it and providing access to Christian faith through a combination of words and pictures using simple illustrations and road sign graphics offering a simple tool that enabled readers to connect with the gospel message.

Theme Three: Praying it

This theme of praying it emerges out of the categorical data surrounding the evangelical act of faith as a crisis opportunity or tipping point with no going back. *Journey Into life* was understood to be pushing towards a decision with a challenge to commit by praying the prayer often using the exact words in the booklet. Opening the door to Jesus in prayer and asking him to come in, resulted in epiphanies and encounters with Jesus, accompanied by phenomena such as supernatural tingling, warmth, speaking in tongues, lights coming on, as well as profound experiences of the Holy Spirit and a deep sense of the presence of God. For others it took time, was more cerebral and less dramatic resulting in calmness, peace and change with the experience of God being there and answering prayers.

Theme Four: Holding onto it

The categorical data showed an ongoing physical attachment to the booklet with *Journey Into Life* offering a symbol of remembrance and acting as a physical object of faith. Not only was *Journey Into Life* an important piece of theological paraphernalia, it continued to resonate as a core systematic theology never to be departed from, providing reassurance of what it meant to be a Christian and

functioning to reaffirm the basis of Christian belief. The booklet provided a solid foundation and also maintained a strong sense of authority. There was also, in addition to the physical attachment, a sense of nostalgic attachment to *Journey Into Life* as a fondly regarded object that has been kept, held onto and treasured with original copies being highly valued artefacts, articles and icons of faith.

Theme Five: Handing it on

The categorical analysis revealed that implicit within the process of *Journey Into Life* being handed out, was the idea that those who received it and its message would then hand it on to others. Sharing this gospel through person-to-person evangelism was an important part of the inculturation of the readers into the evangelical camp. The narratives revealed a variety of evangelistic practices amongst the *Journey Into Life* alumni with some instances of the message of the tract being immediately and spontaneously handed on. The narrative sections concerning the process of the handing on this message of *Journey Into Life* revealed some doubts and a sense of failure carried by those who felt that they should be handing it on in the prescribed way. The data showed that some participants had developed alternative and more diverse embodied practices of 'handing on' the message of the *Journey Into Life*.

Summary

These five emergent themes from the participant interview data form the basis of this social and theological analysis of *Journey Into Life* with each theme being presented and developed in detail under the following chapter headings:

Chapter Four: Given it – *Journey Into Life* aboard the Evangelical 'Argo'.

Chapter Five: Reading it – Wrapping and Unwrapping *Journey Into Life*.

Chapter Six: Praying it – The Spirit of the Gift of *Journey Into Life*.

Chapter Seven: Holding onto it – Souvenir, Relic and Icon of Faith.

Chapter Eight: Handing it on – Handing on the Gift of *Journey Into Life*.

These themes are now analysed below.

Chapter Four – *Journey Into Life* aboard the Evangelical Argo

The Gift

All the participants in this research into *Journey Into Life* had the experience of being ‘given it’ in the process of the initial exchange of the tract. The interview narratives demonstrated that the context of the exchange of the gift of *Journey Into Life* was primarily from within the evangelical faith community, particularly at evangelical camps, youth groups, student Christian Unions and missions as well as evangelical churches and homes. The site of engagement with this object was not through the type of indiscriminate tract distribution that might be encountered today in a busy high street or at a major railway station, but through the development of intentional personal relationships developed by members of the evangelical faith community in gatherings often engineered for the very purpose of the presenting and gifting of this tract and its message.¹ *Journey Into Life* was typically given or presented at times of transition and change, with reception offering immediate incorporation into evangelical groups and congregations. The five-fold process of exchange identified in the interview data² centered around the giving and receiving of ‘the gift’, not only as an object but also as a religious artefact articulating social and theological meaning. Anthropological gift exchange theory, originally developed by Marcel Mauss, has provided a unique mechanism for gaining a deeper understanding of the social and cultural processes involved in the gifting of this religious artefact *Journey Into Life*.³ The ‘total social phenomena’ in the gifting and exchange of *Journey*

¹ This is not to say that the tract was never used in public distribution. Brown could remember being offered the tract in a shopping centre.

² The Five-Fold process of exchange categorised as 1) Given it 2) Reading it 3) Praying it 4) Holding onto it 5) Handing it on.

³ Gift exchange theory as originally outlined in 1925 by Durkheim’s nephew Marcel Mauss in an anthropological treatise called ‘*The Gift*’. His theory was based on ethnographic studies using ‘careful comparison’ of ‘archaic societies’ systems of what he called ‘prestation, gift and potlatch’ in Polynesia, Melanesia and North West America. His stated research question was, ‘what is the principle whereby the gift received has to be repaid? What force is there in the thing given which compels the recipient to make a return?’ His study, published in ‘*The Gift*’, established gift

Into Life as well as its continuing life as one of the valuables that never stop⁴ circulating offers an unique and new gaze into the development and expression of evangelical identity and practice centered around this iconic religious artefact.⁵

Evangelical 'Kula'

Evangelical faith has commonly been perceived to have developed out of a largely individualistic and pietistic ecclesiology especially in an approach to mission that emphasises personal conversion. However, what has become apparent in this research is the way that the evangelical practice of giving the tract *Journey Into Life* was not just an isolated and individualised practice, but instead was part of a much larger social system more akin to the 'total prestation' identified by Mauss in his ethnographic studies of 'archaic societies'.⁶ His methodology emphasised the importance of examining the exchange of the gift in its specific context, as he sought to understand it as part of a much wider 'total social phenomena' by using the gift exchange process as a way of seeing into the complexities and nuanced practices of the group. As he said 'many ideas and principles are to be noted in systems of this type'⁷ and he was especially attentive to the moral and religious obligations surrounding the giving and receiving of gifts, particularly in his identification of 'spiritual mechanisms' that were at work in the gift exchange process.⁸ In his theory Mauss drew upon ethnographic studies including the exhaustive pioneering fieldwork of Bronislaw Malinowski whose participant observations were made whilst living for three years among the people of the Trobriand Islands. Malinowski's research

exchange as an anthropological method and theory that has continued to be developed, refined, and used in social research seeking to understand specific cultural groups and their social systems.

⁴ Mauss, pp. 1-12. Mauss based his theory on three obligations: 1) to give 2) to receive 3) to reciprocate or repay

⁵ Gift exchange theory as proposed by Marcel Mauss has continued to receive critical attention from sociology in Claude Levi-Strauss, *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss* (London: Routledge, 1950); Annette B. Weiner, *Inalienable Possessions: The Paradox of Keeping While Giving* (Berkeley: California Press, 1992).

⁶ Rambo, p. 5. A view endorsed by Rambo's empirical research that showed the complex social process at work in the phenomenon of personal conversion.

⁷ Mauss, p. 5.

⁸ Ibid.

described these island people as the 'Argonauts of the Western Pacific' who he observed as investing huge amounts of time, energy and resources into building 'Kula' fleets that travelled over long distances to make gifts to other islanders. Mauss interpreted the 'Kula' as the way these tribes were caught in a ring or circle of giving and exchanging the gift.⁹

Evangelical 'Argonauts'

Malinowski's 'Argonauts of the Western Pacific' were shown through his ethnographic research to have built their culture and society around the gift exchange practice of the 'Kula' by taking their most valuable objects [*Vaygu'a*] in the form of necklaces [*soulava*] and bangles [*mwali*] to the outer-reaches of their known world. Malinowski showed how their lives and community organization as well as their identity and spirituality in the form of 'myths' centered around these artefacts and their transmission in the form of gifts.¹⁰ The 'Kula' fleet and its trade was aristocratic, and the preserve of their social elite being reserved for its chiefs with the 'nobles themselves doing business'.¹¹ The priority of the 'Kula' exchange was the reason for the expeditions and for the establishment of relationships that aided and abetted the exchange process. Warren and his contemporaries were part of a mid-twentieth-century evangelical cultural system built around the gifting and exchange, not of the 'Kula' but of the 'gospel' as expressed in *Journey Into life*. Although their outward appearance was very different the evangelical Argonauts of the mid-twentieth-century who pioneered the systems for the gifting and exchange of *Journey Into Life* bore a noticeable similarity to their archaic counterparts. Significantly, the exchange process in both societies was placed in the hands of the elites, chiefs and nobles. Cambridge and public school educated Warren and the 'chiefs' in this post war modern evangelical movement were from upper middle class homes and the product of an intentional pre-war 'grand strategy', involving the selection and

⁹ Malinowski; Mauss, p. 20; Michael W. Young, *Ethnography of Malinowski: The Trobriand Islands 1915-1918* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 14.

¹⁰ Ivan Strenski, *Malinowski and the Work of Myth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

¹¹ Mauss, p. 20.

training of gifted 'key men' who would become the future evangelical leaders.¹² As with the '*Kula*' fleet, its trade was in the hands of a social elite who prioritised, not '*Kula*' exchange, but gospel exchange, embarking on life time expeditions for the establishment of lives that would aid and abet the exchange process of the gift of the *Journey Into Life*.

The Evangelical 'Argo'

The gift carried by the evangelical 'Argo' was launched not from Malinowski's Trobriand Islands but from the islands of United Kingdom on the high tide of a mid-1950s evangelical revival. Warren said that he first wrote *Journey Into Life* in 1962 when 'the evangelical revival' was underway, having been ignited by the 'terrific' Billy Graham Mission of 1955 which he said 'transformed the Anglican ministry, which became a powerful evangelical one' with hundreds entering the 'Church of England ministry'.¹³ Warren's positive, enthusiastic emic 'take' on the state of the mid-twentieth-century evangelical 'Argo' from which *Journey Into Life* was launched is not without academic support. Brown endorses Warren's view by showing that in the 'first half of the 1950s, organised Christianity experienced the greatest per annum growth in Church membership, Sunday School enrolment, Anglican confirmations, and Presbyterian recruitment of its baptised constituency since the eighteenth-century'.¹⁴ Warren's conviction that 'Billy Graham was very largely behind it' is shared by Barclay who said that Graham gave them 'a renewed confidence'.¹⁵ and even Grace Davie from her perspective of secularising decline in mid-twentieth-century British Religion concedes that in this 'Anglican decade' of the 1950s there was 'at least, a distinct feeling of well-being, of revival even, within church circles'.¹⁶ The evangelical 'Argo' that developed from this post-war revival was particularly focused on

¹² Bebbington, pp. 225-26; Ward, p. 45. An Inter-Varsity Fellowship meeting was told in 1934 that they were to win what might be called a "Key Man". Two 'key men' were David Shepherd the England former test cricketer and future bishop of Liverpool and John Stott the Rector of All Souls Langham Place, the leading post-war evangelical.

¹³ Norman Warren, 'Author Interview', ed. by Christopher Noble (2011).

¹⁴ Brown, pp. 172-73.

¹⁵ Barclay, p. 71.

¹⁶ Davie, p. 31.

youth ministry and part of the evangelical 'grand strategy' in the expansion and democratisation of youth ministry through means of a growing number of evangelical youth camps. Based on the now well known 'Bash' camps these holidays created what this research has labelled the evangelical 'Argo', that not only created but later carried the evangelical message of *Journey Into Life*.¹⁷ Warren acknowledged the 'Argo' and the significant influence of these evangelical 'Argonauts' on him particularly through the Varsity and Public School [VPS] camps. He said that they were a 'tremendous influence [and you know] they influenced me and as I said I was very young in faith'.¹⁸ At Cambridge University Warren became increasingly involved in the evangelical 'Argo' and particularly in the exchange of the evangelical gift of the gospel both at the University and through church based Mission in London and camps during the holidays.

Communication Crisis

Malinowski's ethnographic research of the '*Kula*' exchange process sought to understand gift exchange from a set of highly contextualised presuppositions about the evolution of the economic market with a Darwinian perspective on progress and a colonial sense of superiority.¹⁹ He brought a different world-view and despite the many resonances with archaic society there was of course a huge disconnect between the two worlds. Malinowski was operating in a different context and, as it has been shown by more recent ethnographic studies such as those by Weiner, his understanding of the '*Kula*' exchange was limited by his own cultural and social context,²⁰ particularly as Weiner has argued in his failure to understand the role and power of women.²¹ Anthropology and theology both wrestle with this contextual tension not only in the object of study but also in the context-laden lives of both the researched and researchers. This

¹⁷ See Introduction for explanation of the influence of the 'Bash' Camps on evangelical leaders.

¹⁸ Warren.

¹⁹ Young, p. 4. He was the son of Polish Aristocrats.

²⁰ Strenski, p. xxi. Argues that Malinowski had a significant 'appreciation of context'.

²¹ Weiner, p. xi. Annette Weiner's fieldwork demonstrated that Malinowski had underestimated the wealth and power of Trobriand women.

contextual tension was evidenced early in this research when it emerged in the author narrative that Warren had not produced *Journey Into Life* for the middle-class audience of the evangelical 'Argo' but for a very different and challenging context. The big surprise in the initial phase of this study was Warren's disclosure that the context for the development of *Journey Into Life* was a large working-class mining community near Coventry. The booklet was born out of a crisis of communication as Warren sought to bring the gift of the gospel in its middle-class wrapping to what he described as a non-literary culture that only read the 'red top' newspapers. Warren described the experience as 'shattering' when he first realised that his inherited approach to handing on the gospel message through wordy books was not working. As explained in the following chapters, out of this communication crisis Warren developed a contextualised approach using visual strategies that sought to bridge the communication gap that he faced in bringing his message to a very different culture from that of the predominantly middle-class evangelical 'Argo'.²²

Paradoxical and Pervasive Simplicity

As will be further demonstrated in chapter twelve the process of simplification and evangelical simplicity is paradoxical, but its first manifestation in the data came through the surprising discovery that *Journey Into Life* had its greatest impact not amongst its original intended audience of 1960s British working-class coal miners but amongst middle-class youth of the 1970s and 1980s. A further and deeper level of this paradox was later revealed as it became clear that the research sample were nearly all identified as highly educated and academically adroit leaders. The research narratives showed these emerging evangelical leaders being given the gift of *Journey Into Life* at a crucial time in their lives with it proving to be a powerful but simple tool in the initial formation of a new generation of evangelical leaders. As the research developed it became clear that the evangelical idea of simplification was pervasive and indeed seminal as some

²² It is important to note that this research whilst the research sample was predominantly middle-class this cannot be generalised to whole readership of the tract.

of these evangelical leaders were themselves developing new evangelistic paradigms based around simplified and contextualised evangelism, just as Warren had originally done in his working-class context in Bedworth in the early 1960s. The research interview data showed that nearly all the participants had been given *Journey Into Life* in the context of a camp or through contact with an evangelical youth group. Whilst not as exotic as Malinowski's Islands of the Western Pacific these camps and evangelical youth fellowships offered the evangelical 'Argonauts' strategic sites of engagement and exchange and what follows is a description and analysis of this process of gift exchange at four key sites. The research interview data collated under the theme 'given it', opened up for examination the ways that the camps, evangelical young person's fellowship groups, university Christian Unions and evangelical churches presented and offered the gift of *Journey Into Life* to these young people.

The Evangelical Camp

The Obligation to Partake

The importance of the evangelical camp as a site of gift exchange for *Journey Into Life* was initially highlighted in the author interview that demonstrated the significant influence attributed by Warren to his own engagement with both Pathfinder and VPS camps.²³ Warren said that he was able to write the whole of *Journey Into Life* 'almost straight off' in one day because it was what he had learned at the camps and as he said 'nothing in it was original'.²⁴ When questioned about the source of his theology for *Journey Into Life*, Warren was clear that it was 'evangelical camps' that had provided him with his raw materials. The camp system built within its participants what Mauss describes as an 'obligation to partake' and an overall 'obligation to receive'.²⁵ Hurst's account of his experience at a Scripture Union camp in 1977 shows the way that this sense of obligation was built into the process of attending camp. Even as an eleven-year-old boy, he was aware that he was going to a 'specifically Christian

²³ Warren, p. 6.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 9.

²⁵ Mauss, pp. 10-11.

sort of camp'²⁶ organised every year by his religious education teacher who had a connection with Scripture Union and he remembered that 'it almost felt as if we were in a kind of pipeline, a sort of conveyor belt'.²⁷ The camp leaders would hold dormitory discussion groups each evening and he recalled that one of them handed him a copy of *Journey Into Life* and then proceeded to take him through the booklet page by page. He said that he had:

The feeling that they used the pattern of *Journey Into Life* throughout the week to explain a very, very particular understanding of what it meant to be a Christian based on that book.²⁸

Far from being an individualised experience, Hurst was conscious of the corporate and incorporating nature of this process that he summarised by saying 'so for me I suppose *Journey Into Life* represented joining in with this big community of Christians who all believed the same thing'.²⁹ The 'obligation to partake' was strong and the whole camp was built around joining this big community through the mechanism of receiving the gift of the booklet *Journey Into Life* as well as embracing its spiritual message. In describing the process of transfer of the object in archaic societies through the observation of their ceremonies of transfer, Mauss had identified the complex interplay between the freedom and autonomy of the recipient and what he described as the 'mechanisms of obligation' that are resident in the gifts themselves.³⁰ This interplay between the autonomy of the recipient and the mechanisms of obligation in the gifting of *Journey Into Life* at Camp, became apparent in the research interviews with King and May. King attended a crusader camp at Bembridge on the Isle of Wight in 1969 and whilst he had come across *Journey Into Life* before he recalled that it 'was the first time I actually had one that was mine'.³¹ He felt that the whole thing was 'pushing towards a decision' which he went along with by engaging in a process of making a decision and praying the

²⁶ Hurst, p. 3.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 7.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 8.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 7.

³⁰ Mauss, p. 21.

³¹ King, p. 1.

prayer, whilst being aware of feeling ‘quite deeply convinced’ that he was saying something that he ‘didn’t really believe’.³² Having been brought up in a Christian home he felt deep down that he was already a Christian but wasn’t able to express that or to have that conversation in the context of the mechanism of obligation that was at work in the camp. There was a conflict between his inner sense which was saying ‘I thought I was a Christian, I thought I’d always been a Christian’ and the obligation to receive the gift of *Journey Into Life* in a manner that obliged him to say something that he ‘didn’t really believe’.³³ This obligation to receive and the consequent limitation of personal freedom in the transfer of the gift is characteristic of the ‘archaic’ gift exchange practices as studied by Mauss. The obligation to receive the gift from within the Christian camp system paralleled the descriptions by Mauss of the Dayaks who developed a whole set of customs based on the obligation to partake, and who significantly, took a refusal to accept their gift as ‘the equivalent of a declaration of war’.³⁴ This refusal of ‘friendship and intercourse’³⁵ was something that King as a twelve-year-old boy found impossible to resist although at the time ‘he did not get a sense of being forced’.³⁶ He therefore submitted to this ‘encouragement’ to participate in the prescribed gift exchange process that in later life he came to describe as the ‘evangelical act of faith’.³⁷ May’s experience of this mechanism of obligation showed many similarities with that of King and Hurst when as an eleven-year old he attended a Scripture Union summer camp at West Runton in 1969. May recalled that his participation ‘wasn’t because everybody else was doing it’ and he remembered that he felt ‘no pressure whatsoever’.³⁸ In this particular mechanism of obligation May recalled that he ‘wasn’t just offered it as a free gift’, but had to buy *Journey Into Life* with his pocket money.³⁹ He said that he found himself ‘so attracted to it’ and bought it partly because he perceived it to

³² Ibid. p. 3.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Mauss, p. 11.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ King, p. 4.

³⁷ Ibid. p. 3.

³⁸ May, p. 4.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 9.

be a precious object that he has kept hold of as a highly valued precious thing ever since.⁴⁰

The Young Persons Fellowship

The research interviews revealed the significant role played by youth fellowships within the evangelical 'Argo' for the gifting and exchange of *Journey Into Life*. As Ward points out the youth fellowship was 'by no means an exclusively evangelical invention'⁴¹ but in the post-war period it was developed in evangelical parishes as a way of 'establishing and maintaining a committed core or nucleus'.⁴² Linked in with the evangelical camps, parish based YPF's formed a comprehensive network of evangelical youth groups initially under the auspices of YPF. [Later incorporated under the umbrella title of CYFA.]⁴³ It was in this context that *Journey Into Life* was given to Ford, Chester and Herne and there were two prominent processes of gifting and exchange in evidence within these groups. The first was in the form of a relational exchange and the second involved the use of a ceremony of transfer in the form of a musically based event.

Relational Exchange in the Young Person's Fellowship

Chester was initially given *Journey Into Life* by a friend as they were walking home from school. This friend was part of a church youth group and Chester said that she received *Journey Into Life* as a gift from her friend as 'a precious gift as though it was a gift from Jesus'.⁴⁴ This gifting of *Journey Into life* was in the context of relational ministry from within the youth group whose obligation to give was further demonstrated when they gave it to her again whilst on a youth group ski-trip. This obligation to give from within the youth group was also the experience of Ford who was given *Journey Into life* in a youth group that he had

⁴⁰ Ibid. 'It has gone with me from home when I was living with my parents, to single life and to married life, to being Father and Grandfather, it's still here'.

⁴¹ Ward, p. 92.

⁴² Ibid. p. 53.

⁴³ Church Youth Fellowship Association [CYFA] developed an approach to youth ministry as outlined by the then secretary of CYFA. Mark Ashton, *Christian Youth Work* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1986).

⁴⁴ Chester, p. 9.

been invited to. Ford who was from a completely non-Christian background was given it three times in this relational context of the church youth group. He recalled that 'this guy called Norman gave me this *Journey Into Life*, he said have a read of that and see what you think? I took it home [yeah] that's the Christian faith, nice!'.⁴⁵ Subsequently Ford was given two further copies of *Journey Into Life*, so he was given 'three copies of *Journey Into Life* by three independent people'.⁴⁶ It was in this context that the youth fellowship functioned in a manner reminiscent of Malinowski and Mauss's '*Kula*' trade system which involved not only the initial exchange of the object, but also the establishment of a network of many new relationships and further exchanges in addition to the original *Kula* one.⁴⁷

Ceremonies of Transfer in Popular Music

Herne's narrative of transmission involved the 'Young Persons Fellowship' [YPF] but the ceremony of transfer was through a school mission run by a Christian musician called Dave Pope.⁴⁸ This music based approach to youth evangelism was at the forefront of what Ward observed as the 'shift to worship'⁴⁹ that he identifies as spreading from America particularly through the influence of the 'Jesus people' movement and its successors such as the Vineyard Christian Fellowship. Herne's experience at the concert was emotional and she remembered crying however, she was quite adamant that whilst she experienced a 'feeling of relief'⁵⁰ and a sense that she could talk to God, [and that he accepted her], it was *Journey Into Life* that provided the teaching framework with its 'bold and clear pictures'.⁵¹ It was this gifting of the booklet in the context of a folk-rock concert that subsequently gave her a clear understanding in making sense of what was going on and what she was doing. She said that she 'suspected that, had she not been given the booklet she would

⁴⁵ Ford, p. 2.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 4.

⁴⁷ Mauss, p. 21.

⁴⁸ Ward, p. 51. Dave Pope's band called 'Elysian Days'.

⁴⁹ Ibid. pp. 61-74.

⁵⁰ Herne, p. 9.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 4.

have gone away with a 'sort of fuzzy warm feeling without knowing to do anything else'.⁵² Following the event and the exchange of the booklet, there was no official or organised 'follow up', apart from the obligations inherent and resident within the tract itself which led her to seek out a Christian youth group from within her existing peer group. Such ceremonies of transfer through popular Christian music were to develop as outlined in Ward's research particularly as rock worship music took centre stage through charismatic evangelical gatherings and churches in the late 1970s and 1980s. Herne's story demonstrated how this combination of ceremonies of transfer in rock music alongside the relational ministry of the local youth fellowship provided the context for the gifting and exchange of *Journey Into Life*. The circulation and gifting of *Journey Into Life* through the evangelical 'Argo' continued to flow, as these young evangelical 'Argonauts' took not to canoes but to trains and 'went up' to the universities and colleges of the United Kingdom. Herne was specifically introduced to a large London evangelical church by her youth fellowship leader who had connections with that church. This arrangement was very common as young people were linked in to large student churches in university towns and cities. It was in this new context of the university that *Journey Into Life* continued to be exchanged relationally through its gifting and transfer into these larger communities of young people.

The University Christian Union

The steady flow of young people from the evangelical camps and YPFs to the universities saw *Journey Into Life* being gifted and exchanged through the growing networks of University and College Christian Unions. As Bebbington points out 'with the post war expansion of higher education the bodies affiliated with IVF [Inter-varsity fellowship later becoming UCCF – the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship] grew in numbers, scale and confidence'.⁵³ Clements was given *Journey Into Life* in 1980 by his brother who was a student at Cambridge University and part of the evangelical 'Argo' through the student

⁵² Ibid. p. 9.

⁵³ Bebbington, p. 259.

ministry of an American campus ministry called 'Navigators'.⁵⁴ Clements said that 'it came at a good moment for me because then when I went to university I naturally tapped into those networks quickly'.⁵⁵ Wood was given *Journey Into Life* at university when, as a student at Hendon College, a fellow student befriended him and took him to a youth group at Christ Church, North Finchley. He described the process of exchange as follows:

I was evangelised by a Christian, went to a vibrant youth group...I heard some speakers...and my epiphany came through this [*Journey Into Life*].⁵⁶

Wood went on to become a significant international evangelist particularly amongst students and he said that 'one of the most remarkable things about these booklets' was that they 'were used extensively in universities' and in the millions.⁵⁷ University was also the context of the gifting of *Journey Into Life* for Wells who was given it by his girlfriend at university in 1980. Wells subsequently became a vicar in the Church of England, and has continued to gift *Journey Into Life*, particularly in the evangelical Church context that has been a significant place of transfer, and it is to this context of the church that we now turn.⁵⁸

The Evangelical Church

Frontline Evangelism

In the descriptions of the gifting and exchange of *Journey Into Life* the 'constant' in the context of the camps, youth groups and universities has been the local church, particularly the churches of the evangelical 'Argo'. Local evangelical churches particularly Anglican evangelical parish churches were a major site for the transfer and exchange of this artefact and it was the local church that was the original and immediate context out of which *Journey Into Life* was first crafted. As with the Trobriander's *Vaygu'a* of arm shells and necklaces the tract had meaning, value and power in its own community before being taken out on

⁵⁴ Navigators was founded in California by Dawson Trotman in the 1930s.

⁵⁵ Clements, p. 5.

⁵⁶ Wood, p. 25.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 24.

⁵⁸ Wells, p. 21.

a 'Kula' expedition.⁵⁹ In anthropological terms Warren created *Journey Into Life* to be an 'object of cult'⁶⁰ in preparation for the Anglican parochial baptismal ceremony and it is to this 'magic ritual'⁶¹ that we now turn our attention. Warren created *Journey Into Life* to be gifted in the context of preparation of families for the ceremony of Anglican infant baptism. In 1960 he was sent to be an assistant curate to a large mining parish called Bedworth in North Coventry. He said that the parish of forty-thousand people was 'as rough a working-class area as you will find anywhere in the world'⁶² and Warren had the 'shattering experience'⁶³ of culture shock, being separated from his familiar 'middle-class, public school, university environment' and placed in a completely alien culture.⁶⁴ The Rector of Bedworth placed Warren in charge of all Baptisms which at the time were running at about fifteen to twenty a month so as he recalled the task was 'huge' and was 'most of my ministry'.⁶⁵ It was 'front line evangelism'⁶⁶ and in order to do this Warren initially went out on baptism visits to people's homes 'armed with all these books' to give away. However, he soon realised that this was not working as he recalled:

I suddenly realised all the booklets, Maurice Wood and John Stott were useless with people who can't read.⁶⁷

It was this realisation that was the catalyst for Warren's creation of his own booklet that sought to overcome this gap that he came across between his inherited practice of evangelism that used the distribution of books for reading and study to facilitate the assimilation of information. His solution, as will be examined in the next chapter, was to incorporate illustrative material with simple headings and few words. As Warren said 'I think, probably [I was] the first one as far as I know to really try to reach out to the working-class people who

⁵⁹ Mauss, p. 71.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 43.

⁶¹ Young, p. 215. Malinowski pointed to three defining aspects of a magic rituals. 'Words spoken or chanted, some actions carried out and there is always the minister or ministers of the ceremony'.

⁶² Warren, p. 8.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 17.

⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 30.

⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 8.

don't normally read'.⁶⁸ Once armed with his newly created booklet the gifting of *Journey Into Life* quickly became an established part of the preparation for the ritual of paedobaptism, and when *Journey into Life* was published and distributed to evangelical parish churches both clergy and laity used it as they engaged in 'Kula' expeditions out into their communities. These expeditions took the object *Journey Into Life* into a much broader range of environments and onto some of the more distant 'islands' of the Anglican archipelago. *Journey Into Life* soon became an 'object of cult' in terms of what it carried spiritually as part of the preparation for the ritual of paedobaptism. Its functioning can be seen in the experience of Dench and his wife who were visited by their local Anglican vicar who as part of this preparatory process for the baptism of their child gave them a copy of the booklet saying that 'you may find this helpful' with an invitation for further future dialogue about it.⁶⁹ Dench who was from a working-class housing estate said that for him there was 'Christianity in the background but it wasn't really in the family, it wasn't our tradition'.⁷⁰ King also drew attention to the discrepancy between his working-class school Christianity in the late 1960s and the 'Bible belt' message of his Crusader Class.⁷¹ The mechanism of obligation provided by paedobaptismal contact offered an important site of exchange and gifting for *Journey Into Life* particularly in terms of breaking out of its exclusively middle-class habitus and moving into working-class communities as demonstrated in Warren's pioneering work in the mining community of Bedworth.⁷²

Journey Into Life as a gift from the Church

It was an 'out of the way very evangelical' and 'tin hut sort of a place' where Kerr was given *Journey Into Life* 'to read through'.⁷³ This evangelical Free Church where she was given the tract were 'very keen for people to know exactly what

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 28.

⁶⁹ Dench, p. 2.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 4.

⁷¹ King, p. 9.

⁷² *Habitus*. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 72ff.

⁷³ Kerr, p. 1.

they were doing and the reason for it’⁷⁴ and *Journey Into Life* was given as a way of explaining who they were and what they were about. This expression of interest resulted in Kerr finding faith which was in sharp contrast to Brown’s reaction when she was given *Journey Into Life* through a different non-conformist ‘mission outlet’ in the form of a Baptist Church outreach to a residential special school for ‘spastic kids’.⁷⁵ She recalled that ‘often on a Sunday they would bring in this bright young thing [...] very bouncy and Jesus loves you and all that’⁷⁶ type of person who would give out booklets of which *Journey Into Life* was the one that Brown remembered.⁷⁷ She recalled having the booklet ‘thrust’ at her and being told ‘all you’ve got to do is read this stuff and understand it and it’s all sorted ‘cos Jesus loves you right?’.⁷⁸ Brown recalled how this gifting had continued outside the context of the Children’s Home in the town shopping centre where people from the local church would ‘thrust little leaflets’ into her hand and then proceed to tell her that it was ‘all because of my sin and all I needed to do was to repent and it would all be fine’.⁷⁹ Brown said that she ‘either declined politely or swore badly at them or took the little leaflet and ripped it up’.⁸⁰ She recalled that ‘I chucked it on the ground because to me it was actually really, really offensive’.⁸¹ Following this particular experience Brown became angry when people tried to ‘thrust something at’ her as it was ‘painful’ and she felt at the time that it was ‘all utter bollocks’.⁸² In the anthropology of gift exchange as outlined by Mauss this would have been identified as a ‘refusal to accept’⁸³ and viewed as ‘the equivalent of a declaration of war’⁸⁴ which in a way it was. Brown adopted a ‘mindset’ that was hostile to the gifting of *Journey Into Life* or any such booklet and identified herself as ‘Pauline in my breathing

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Brown, p. 2.

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 3.

⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 4. Remembered by the ‘little road signs on the front cover’.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 5.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid. p. 6.

⁸³ Mauss, p. 11.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

out murderous threats'.⁸⁵ Brown's narrative of exchange contrasted markedly with the other evangelicals' experience of being given *Journey Into Life* and was disruptive amongst the exchange narratives because the gifting process produced an increasingly and ultimately violent negative response.⁸⁶ The process of giving functioned differently and perhaps significantly the gift was given in a context that lacked the type of strong relational structure that fostered relationality in the gifting process. Milbank draws attention to the normal human logic which assumes some prior relation to the recipient or at least a simultaneous relation, as when one gives to establish a relationship. He argues that 'without a primary relationality, there can be no gift-exchange, and without the latter, no gift at all'.⁸⁷ The relational structure in the evangelical 'Argo' relied on the giving of *Journey Into Life* in a dialectical relational process between giver and gift [indeed it is a trialectical relationship between the giver, receiver and the context in which the gift is given and exchanged] but significantly in the rejection of the gift by Brown, the context of the gift exchange lacked the opportunity for participation in the relational network of the evangelical 'Argo' where her questions and pain surrounding her disability might have been engaged with more adequately.

Implications of the Disruptive Gifting Narrative

This negative experience of Brown highlights the importance of attending to the contextualisation of theology. As Bevan's provocatively argues 'there is no such thing as "theology"; there is only contextual theology'.⁸⁸ The 'theological imperative'⁸⁹ of context is clearly visible here in this 'disruptive' narrative offered by Brown who was embedded in a very different context from that of the other participants in this research. The context in which 'the gift is given' forms a crucial part of the 'trialectical' process between the giver, the gift and the

⁸⁵ Brown, p. 5.

⁸⁶ Brown described herself as 'obstructive' and was worried that her story was perhaps not one that 'I wanted to hear'. Carolyn Brown, ed. by Christopher Noble (2014).

⁸⁷ John Milbank, 'Can a Gift Be Given? Prolegomena to a Future Trinitarian Metaphysic', *Modern Theology*, 11 (1995), 124.

⁸⁸ Bevan, p. 3.

⁸⁹ Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (London: SCM Press, 1985), p. 3.

context as opposed to simply a 'dialectical' process of exchange between the giver and the gift. Schreiter uses the term 'local theology' to define this 'trialectic' that takes the 'dynamic interaction of all these three roots of gospel, church, and culture'.⁹⁰ What has been exposed here in the examination of these evangelical narratives is a form 'local theology' not strictly in terms of its geography but in terms of its cultural and contextual boundaries. When the Baptist youth minister took *Journey Into Life* to Brown in her residential school he was probably unaware that he had stepped out of one cultural context into a very different world of meaning as he engaged with a group of young people who were grappling with a different and far more complex set of theological and ontological questions than those of the members of the evangelical youth fellowship. Brown's theological and cultural location was completely different, and her situatedness with disability in a 'special school' meant that her gaze was not the same as that of the evangelical Baptist youth group and its young minister. She remembered thinking:

What has the stuff that you're telling me about "Jesus loves me," what's that got to do with my life? I can't walk, I can't speak, I've got no balance, no coordination, I've got no prospects and I've been stuck in a school for spastic kids that I don't want to be in.⁹¹

This was a context and theological gaze that was radically different from the other participants in this study, most of whom had enjoyed a very middle-class and relatively care free childhood and adolescence. As Brown said it was easy for them to 'read this stuff and understand it and its all sorted cos Jesus loves you... but my life still feels like crap'.⁹² In such situations Bevan's assertion that there is only contextual theology comes into sharp focus as Brown's whole perspective and theological questioning were radically contextualised by her physical situation that promoted a serious disconnect in her reading of the simple propositional theology offered by *Journey Into Life*.

⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 21.

⁹¹ Brown, p. 2.

⁹² Ibid. p. 4.

The Great Motivation of the Evangelical 'Argo'

Powerful Motivational Beliefs

Listening to people's personal narratives about how the gift was given through the construction of this 'Argo' in the form of intense 'evangelical activism' at camps, university Christian Unions, young people's fellowships and evangelical churches deposited a simple but powerful question, pertaining to why these evangelicals were so motivated by the idea of giving this gift of *Journey Into Life*? These narrative segments in the data that centred around the research theme of being 'given it' demonstrated a culture that was powerfully motivated by the idea that they had to give this simple tract *Journey Into Life* to anyone who they could encourage onto their relational platform in the evangelical 'Argo'. Just as Mauss and Malinowski had identified in their analysis of the 'Kula' trade in the Trobriand Islands, the obligation to give in the evangelical 'Argo' was a powerful motivational force in their community life and the organising principle around which a great deal of their society and community activity revolved. The same question had confronted Malinowski as a professional stranger who pitched his ethnographer's tent within the culture of 'the other', when he asked why does their whole society and culture seem to be organised around this activity?⁹³ The same question confronts the ecclesiological ethnographer from his tent within the evangelical camp as to why these evangelicals built this comprehensive ecclesial structure and scaffolding for the sole purpose of gifting this object? Malinowski looked for answers about the nature of these motivational forces, beliefs and the ideology that drove the system of exchange in the myths of the Trobriand Islanders. The Trobriand Islands were a community driven by their myths just as evangelicals are a community driven by their beliefs. The 'evangelical activism' that has become a signature characteristic of evangelicalism is an outward expression of these powerful motivational beliefs that have produced a self-confessed 'purpose-driven church'⁹⁴ motivated and 'driven' by this obsession with handing over the gift. 'Carrying the message',

⁹³ Agar. *The Professional Stranger*

⁹⁴ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995).

‘passing it on’ and ‘giving it away’ are central unifying slogans and organizing principles within the discourse and practice of this evangelical ecclesial community as disclosed in these research narratives. The gifting of the article of faith as embodied in *Journey Into Life* is the central organizing principal around which the whole evangelical system revolves and spins.

Voices of Myth and Theology

The motivational force of the belief system that drives this giving of the gift is further disclosed in the following chapters of this thesis as the gift is ‘unwrapped’ and analysed through the participant narratives. As Mauss and Malinowski ‘unwrapped’ Trobriand culture they identified the ‘spirit’ [*hau*] of the gift [*taonga*]⁹⁵ as the spiritual power that fueled, animated, and drove the process and explained what motivated these people to want to continue to engage and persist in this highly demanding form of gift exchange. Powerful myths drove the ‘Kula’ system. The evangelical myths and beliefs that have driven evangelicals obligations to give *Journey into Life* will be explored in chapter nine where this ‘implicit theology,’ behind the motivational beliefs of these evangelical ‘Argonauts’ will be examined and analysed further. However, before that can take place it is the ‘ordinary theology’ of this evangelical community expressed through the narrative voices of the people who were caught up in this system of ‘total prestation’ through the gifting and exchange of *Journey Into Life* that is the immediate focus of our attention. As with Orsi’s classic study of the religious beliefs that shaped and reinforced the identity of the Italian immigrant community in New York⁹⁶ it is through the voices of the participants themselves that the real motivating belief and ‘ordinary theology’⁹⁷ of the artefact *Journey Into Life* is heard and uncovered, revealing how from within the evangelical faith community their implicit theology and identity has been shaped and constructed by this object and article of faith. It is to these voices that we now turn as we examine the way that this apparently simple gift of *Journey into life* was picked

⁹⁵ Mauss, p. 9.

⁹⁶ Orsi. *The Madonna of 115th Street*

⁹⁷ Astley. *Ordinary Theology*

up and read by these young evangelicals as it was exchanged relationally from on board a powerfully motivated evangelical 'Argo'.

Chapter Five - Wrapping and Unwrapping *Journey Into Life*

Reading the Artefact

The very act of reading the artefact *Journey Into Life* was integral to the gift exchange process as each potential recipient was being asked to make a series of judgements and a decision about the nature and intent of the gift that was being offered. As a means of analysing this process in the interview data this research adopted a methodological approach derived from Hendry's studies of Japanese gift exchange practices. Hendry observed that one of the results of our 'ethnocentric intellectual bias' is that we are 'overly concerned with unwrapping' in our quest to expose and 'reveal the perceived essence of things'. The negative consequence of this is that we tend to ignore the significance and meaning that is being conveyed in the wrapping itself. To capitalize on this insight this analysis of the reading of the artefact was therefore in the first instance attentive to the wrapping of *Journey Into Life* by engaging in a careful examination of what the wrapping revealed prior to considering what it concealed.¹ This chapter shows how the process of 'reading it' started with the participants examining and interrogating the cover itself. It draws attention to the implicit sense of decision and choice that each participant experienced through just 'reading the wrapper' in the form of the booklet's cover.² Having examined the way that this wrapping of *Journey Into Life* was read the chapter goes on to analyse the ways in which participants unwrapped and read the contents of the gift. Particular attention is given to its use of visual strategies, especially the role of illustrations, and the way that they worked with the text to convey meaning in enabling a new conceptualisation of faith. The chapter concludes this analysis of the reading of the artefact by looking at the reception variables within this gift exchange

¹ Hendry, p. 5. Hendry points out that one of the results of our 'ethnocentric intellectual bias' is that 'we are perhaps overly concerned with unwrapping, with revealing the perceived essence of things, where we might do well to examine a little further the nature of the concealment used'.

² Ibid. p. 13.

process in the form of reactionary responses to the unwanted gift, inappropriate gifting, its indelibility and the relationship between the timing of the gifting and its ultimate reception.

Reading the Wrapper

The Decision to Pick Up and Read

The wrapping of the gift *Journey Into Life* was in and of itself communicating a sense of choice and decision for the research participants. Such activity endorses Hendry's contention that 'without wrapping the gift would fail to carry the message as properly intended'.³ Ubiquitously present on the evangelical 'Argo' the gift object *Journey Into Life* had a distinctive wrapping that drew the eye of the potential readers as it was placed strategically on coffee tables and makeshift book stalls in youth venues. Hurst's first memory of the booklet was seeing it 'sitting around' particularly towards the end of the week at a youth camp and he clearly remembered its 'quite colourful, green cover with the sort of road sign, with a turning going one way [and one] going the other'.⁴ Prior to taking a copy of *Journey Into Life* some of the research participants reported that even in the process of 'just looking' they had been interacting and engaging deeply with the overall message that they were picking up from the cover even before opening up its pages and studying the words and pictures. May recalled that for him the process of just looking at the wrapping in the form of the front cover had a significant effect and he remembered being 'so attracted' to the booklet because 'it just resonated' with him when he first saw it on 'the little bookstall in the camp'.⁵ He said that the cover was important because he needed 'to make an initial response' and by looking at the choice of directions diagram on the front he 'made that choice and the direction was God'.⁶ Prior to unwrapping and opening up this article of faith it was eliciting a reader response in the act of just looking at the wrapping in the form of the cover. May said 'I think I could see' from the front cover that what was really clear to me was 'that

³ Ibid. p. 43.

⁴ Hurst, p. 1.

⁵ May, p. 9.

⁶ Ibid. p. 12.

I had to make a choice'.⁷ He was not alone in sensing this call to decision through looking at the cover. Wells also reported experiencing this sense of choice and a call for decision that was being mediated through the front cover. Wells said that 'even the road sign on the front cover gives a sense of choice'.⁸ This was a surprising feature of the research data in the way that the wrapping conveyed such a strong sense of choice to the research participants before it was even unwrapped. The sense of choice and decision mediated through the cover was an intentional consequence of a well-thought through and deliberate wrapping of the artefact designed to create a sense of need that positioned *Journey Into Life* as an 'object of desire'.⁹ This consummativity¹⁰ of *Journey Into Life* aroused by its wrapping created a sense of its value and a corresponding desire or need within the individual to choose this object.¹¹

The Wrapping for The Journey

Following Hendry's methodology, analysis of the wrapping of *Journey Into Life* looked at the way the materials, size, colour, graphics, title, typography, words, price and other details on the front and back cover of the booklet influenced the participant's initial decision to read.¹² Hendry's research of Japanese gifts revealed a complex system for the selection of the type of paper wrapping appropriate to the nature and purpose of the gift that was to be presented. One of the concerns of the author before the initial publication of *Journey Into Life* in 1963 was that the publishers might try to 'smooth it up' and 'make it very sort of middle-class', whereas his aim was that it should be for working-class people. Warren's conviction was that it had 'got to remain rough'.¹³ The commissioning editor Timothy Dudley-Smith recalled this decision to 'remain rough' and 'ordinary'. He explained that their Falcon Booklets series used glossy shiny paper

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Wells, p. 3.

⁹ J Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (St Louis: Telos Press, 1981), p. 94.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 83.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 85. 'Strategy of desire'.

¹² Hendry, pp. 15-21.

¹³ Warren.

and photographs, whereas *Journey Into life* was more ordinary and its publication provided the catalyst for a non-glossy series where it fitted in well.¹⁴ As with the other booklets in this Falcon Booklets series, *Journey Into Life* was pocket sized measuring just four inches by seven inches with a thickness of 11/16th of an inch. The paper wrapping for the gift *Journey Into Life* was a lightweight and fairly rough textured paper, 'not card but touching on card'¹⁵ in a matt finish appropriate to the nature and purpose of the gift. Although *Journey Into Life* was usually offered as a gift it had the price printed clearly on the back cover. As with Japanese gifts the monetary value was not hidden and the price tag was not removed. Japanese wrappings use different combinations of coloured strings called *mizuhiki* to convey meaning about the gift in terms of its nature and purpose. For auspicious occasions *mizuhiki* of gold, silver and red are used with specific combinations of colours being chosen to signify differing levels of formality.¹⁶ The colours of yellow and green chosen for the wrapping of *Journey Into Life* also conveyed meaning both in terms of the overall look and in the framing of the graphic and the title itself. Printed by means of a hot metal type letterpress machine the cover used just yellow and green ink on a white paper background.¹⁷ The overall effect was to signify an appropriate level of formality. It was ordinary and understated and although being slightly better quality than the print on the inside leaves the cover projected the idea of it being a no-nonsense, down to earth, non-glossy gift.

A Pictorial Guide to the Christian Life

As well as the cost of the gift that is being gifted, Japanese gifts also leave a space in which to write the specific purpose of the gift. *Journey Into Life* also makes space for these elements in the form of its purpose, subtitle and author as well as the monetary value. The specific purpose is stated in its title *Journey Into*

¹⁴ Timothy Dudley-Smith. *Journey Into Life* is listed under the heading *Christian Living Series* and is one of sixty titles in the collection.

¹⁵ Trevor Whiffin, 'Professional Printer Interview', ed. by Christopher Noble (2016).

¹⁶ Hendry, p. 16.

¹⁷ Whiffin. The road sign graphic being etched on a wood block mounted metal plate for hot metal pressing. The printer observed that the cover was 'more finely printed' and 'may have been produced separately'.

Life offering a gift that when unwrapped will provide the recipient with a journey and that journey is being presented as a life journey. The purpose of the gift expressed in this title is a significant aspect of the wrapping's appeal to its recipients and as with Japanese gifts the space allocated for writing the purpose of the gift is important. The purpose of *Journey Into Life* was stated in the title, the graphic and the explanatory text 'a pictorial guide to the Christian Life'. The 'faith as a journey' metaphor is a popular one even today with significant historical roots in the biblical concept of exodus¹⁸ and in church history particularly the notion of pilgrimage.¹⁹ The origin of this title for the booklet is worth recounting as it arose from a crisis and an inspirational moment rather than in a thought through process of deliberation and experimentation in focus groups. The title 'came' to the author when the booklet first went to the printers and the printer called Warren saying that he did not have a title for the front cover. As Warren spoke to the printer he said 'it just came' as he said 'journey - it just came - *Journey Into Life* – it came right out on the phone'.²⁰ This metaphor had already been in use within the wider evangelical community²¹ however the idea of faith being a journey was shown in the data to be one that people could relate very strongly to and was an important piece of communication even before the content of *Journey Into Life* was engaged with.²²

Communication in its Own Right

The road sign graphic taken from 1960s motorway signs augmented the title *Journey Into Life* and became the signature identifying feature of the booklet contributing significantly to its iconic place in the development of evangelical

¹⁸ The idea of exodus was also embraced and popularised in the *Journey Into Life* years by the Rastafarian movement. For its popular expression in this period see the lyrics of "exodus" by Bob Marley and The Wailers released by Island Records in 1977.

¹⁹ A notion immortalised in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

²⁰ Warren. Norman Warren later reflected that he favoured the word 'into' because of the New Testament emphasis on 'believing into' which he said gives the idea of moving into life.

²¹ Garth Lean, *Good God, It Works!*, (Poole: Blandford Press, 1974), p. 12. 'The beginning of my journey into faith, a journey which still continues forty years later'. The journey metaphor was used extensively by evangelicals in the 1930s particularly by the 'Oxford Group'.

²² Herne, p. 10. Used the phrase 'it's a journey', when speaking of her faith.

subcultural identity.²³ In the process of identifying participants for this research the way to trigger and stimulate memory of *Journey Into Life* was to identify it as 'the road sign tract'. The graphic on the front cover had not only given *Journey Into Life* an 'iconic' place in evangelical youth sub-culture but was easily recognisable, identifiable and remembered through its 'road sign' cover graphic even thirty years on from its original gifting. Produced on a metal plate then raised and mounted on a wooden block this graphic was letter pressed leaving the distinctive white right turn sign. Respondents identified two main reasons why they thought that the cover was so effective. Firstly, the image was memorable because it was 'so simple' and immediately identifiable with one interviewee shouting 'that's the one!' when the original version was produced at interview.²⁴ Secondly, it was felt to carry an implicit question even prior to opening. It was perceived by two research participants as giving 'a sense of choice'²⁵ or decision, with one respondent reporting that the cover communicated to her that 'you've got two ways you can go and you have a decision to make'.²⁶

Unwrapping the Gift

Having looked at the wrapping and its effect we now turn to look at the way participants explained their experience of unwrapping the gift of *Journey Into Life*. In seeking to understand how *Journey Into Life* acted as an article of faith for the participants this analysis focused on the text, the illustrations and the interplay between them to explore how it connected and the way in which the readers brought the overall text into meaning. For this analysis *Journey Into Life* will be unwrapped, engaging the text with the interview data to explore the participants' experience and their explanations of this article's role in their embracing of an evangelical Christian theology and faith identity.

²³ Dudley-Smith. Typography for 1963 CPA edition of *Journey Into Life* was by Timothy Dudley-Smith and the road signs graphic was created by Gordon Stowell who had been the art director at Crusade Magazine.

²⁴ Hurst, p. 1.

²⁵ Wells, p. 1.

²⁶ Herne, p. 4.

Divisive Questions

The question on page one of *Journey Into Life* 'what is a Christian?' helped King to make sense of a division that he was caught up in between a mainstream mid twentieth-century working-class Anglican ecclesiology and the evangelical ecclesiology of the evangelical 'Argo'. He said:

I'd been brought up in a Christian family [where] it's about the evangelical act of faith and at the same time I was looking at kids at my school who I couldn't contemplate possibly being Christians, who were Christians sacramentally and I was living with that and I was fascinated with it.²⁷

The questions and answers on page one of *Journey Into Life* had a significant impact on King because they struck at the heart of the difference between the evangelical Christianity of the evangelical 'Argo' that he had been brought up with and the cultural Christianity of his working-class secondary school in Enfield in the early 1970s. King recalled:

I do remember reading what is a Christian? Are you a Christian? I don't remember the exact words but you were brought up a Christian. Your mother was a Christian, the whole thing.²⁸

He said that the reason that these words impacted him so forcefully was because he had been trying to reconcile the difference between the 'Catholic brand of Anglicanism'²⁹ of his secondary school and his family home that was in the evangelical 'Argo'. He recalled that his school held a big end of term all school communion service where they would go down to St James Anglican Parish Church and as he said:

I would be amazed at the people who would go up and receive communion thinking What! You're a Christian? It made no sense to me.³⁰

Having been brought up in the evangelical 'Argo' King was deeply engaged by the questions on page one of *Journey Into Life* that had been specifically addressed

²⁷ King, p. 3.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 2.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

to the 'baby boomer' generation who had been brought up in post war Anglicanism. The questions on page one in *Journey Into life* corresponded with the questions that King had been personally wrestling with as he was 'thinking theologically'. The young people at his school from working-class homes were challenging King's middle-class evangelical concept of Christianity by getting confirmed and taking communion and as he talked with his peers he discovered 'hey yeah there is something there, it's just a different brand of Christianity'. But he also found himself 'resisting' what *Journey Into Life* was telling him because as he said 'I thought I was a Christian, I thought I'd always been a Christian' and he felt that he did not have to make a decision because as he said 'I can't remember a time when I wasn't a Christian, it just seemed second nature to me and it never occurred to me that I had to decide for myself'.³¹ King's wrestling with the tension between his own evangelical upbringing and this cultural Christianity in mid-twentieth-century Britain had also been experienced by Warren and it was his engagement with this tension that informed the opening questions in *Journey Into Life*.

Working-Class Ecclesiology and Culture

This first page and its question 'what is a Christian?' engaged the middle-class ecclesiology of the evangelical 'Argo' with the inherited working-class Anglicanism of the mining community of Bedworth where Warren was sent as a Church of England Curate in 1960. Warren recalled that Bedworth was socially the opposite to the middle-class world of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship and the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union. It was a huge mining parish of about 40,000 people in North Coventry with two fully operational pits. He said 'it was a shattering experience, because I suddenly realised all the booklets were useless with people who can't read'. People could read but 'very few would read'. Commenting on the literature of the Evangelical Argo at that time Warren said 'it was pretty middle-class and so were the booklets of Maurice Wood and John Stott, brilliant and effective for that clientele, no good for the working-class'.

³¹ Ibid.

Warren recalled that ‘the people were far from stupid, bright, quick witted and highly skilled with their hands’, but as he recalled they were generally not good at reading and it was this that presented Warren with his first major challenge as he began the process of thinking about the design of the booklet.

Subversive Simplicity and Certainty

Simplicity was Warren’s first answer to the problem of a non-reading culture and on the face of it page one deals with this by providing a simple rhetorical device using a five-fold repetition to reinforce the message, ‘that doesn’t make you a Christian’. Behind this didactic device of reinforcement through repetition is an evangelical theological imperative that is subverting the traditional Anglican and Catholic understanding of the gift of Christ and his Spirit as something to be received sacramentally and corporately through Baptism and Confirmation, rather than through what King described as ‘the evangelical act of faith’, with the gift being appropriated by ‘making a decision’. There is behind this subversion of the sacramental tradition the assumed hegemonic theological and cultural dominance of the evangelical ‘Argo’ with its employment of what Roman Catholic Missiologist Bevens describes as the ‘top down translation model’ that is expressed in the view that we’ve got it and you haven’t’.³² As the ‘owners of inalienable possessions’³³ in the form of this evangelical gospel message it is presented as something that the reader lacks and it is supplied by those who have been privileged with the knowledge. Dench’s reflection on his experience of growing up as a working-class youth in the 1960s was that ‘lots of young people especially young men’ were ‘looking for certainty and they liked the fact that there is a certain answer’.³⁴ The opening page of *Journey Into Life* not only raises the question what is [and who is not] a Christian, but promises to deliver the answer for people who are ‘looking for answers and are looking to others for answers rather than thinking that they know the answers for themselves’.³⁵

³² Bevens, pp. 37-53.

³³ Weiner, p. 150.

³⁴ Dench, p. 14.

³⁵ Ibid. p. 15.

Dench felt that this was not the case today in postmodernity where people would find it offensive, particularly the imposition of 'authority' rather than people being allowed the space to 'make up their own mind' and to decide for themselves.³⁶ This use of a tabloid style editorial authority was the result of a deliberate choice by the author and the authoritative tabloid tone in conjunction with the 'red top' style and layout of *Journey Into Life* provided a simple and convincing presentation for its non-reading audience.

The Tabloid Tract

Journey Into Life was the realization of Warren's vision to create a booklet that did not consist of just pages of print but as with the popular tabloids conveyed news by means of pictures and captions.³⁷ Reflecting on the reading habits of his parishoners in Bedworth, Warren said that he wanted to produce something that was more Red Top Tabloid *News of The World* and *The Daily Mirror* than a more intellectually demanding and highbrow broadsheet paper.³⁸ In his first year Warren lived with a widow, and her adopted son, 'down the Bulkington Road', which he described as 'really as rough a working-class area as you will find anywhere in the world I should think'.³⁹ As a curate in such a poor area Warren had very little money and the salary was small, 'it was about thirty pounds a month, pocket money,' so he used to read *The Daily Mirror* and *The News of The World*, as they were the only papers that his landlady took. As he read these 'red top' papers everyday he was struck by the way they put the news across. Warren was frustrated that there was 'nothing I could give to people and I thought why can't we do something like this on the Christian life?'⁴⁰ This was 'the starting of it with a picture, caption, a little bit more and if you wanted to read you had to go further down'. So, the tabloid tract was born as Warren moved out of his logocentric environment and into the emerging visual culture of 1960s Britain.

³⁶ Ibid. pp. 13-15.

³⁷ Norman Warren, 'Writing the Good News', (The College of Evangelists).

³⁸ Warren, p. 8.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Visual Culture with Pictures and Captions in Print

Warren realised that to communicate effectively he needed to engage with visual culture. Looking at this from today's vantage point he said 'what with television, the phones – it's all visual'.⁴¹ Booklets were already in existence but what this did was to bring in illustrative material because the others had no illustrative material at all and were designed for the literate people. As Warren said:

I mean I was, I think, probably the first one as far as I know to really try to reach out to the really working-class people who don't normally read. That was where I think it was a first, first one.⁴²

Following a visit from missionaries who had been working in remote areas of the Philippines and who used pictures widely, Warren recalled that he started an experiment with pictures and captions. He said:

I sat down one day when the Rector was away and I had a very free day and in fact I wrote the whole of *Journey Into Life*, the words in one day, I did almost straight off.⁴³

He said 'I'd been to camps and so there is nothing in it that is original', so 'the originality was putting it down in that space, with illustrations'.⁴⁴ In his early drafts Warren's pictures took the form of stick men until one of his children's Godmothers who was an artist came to stay.⁴⁵ Warren recalled 'I told her what I wanted, and she did drawings at various stages and we then did a mock up'.⁴⁶ Warren sent a draft to several Christian publishers who all sent it back as too naïve. The only exception was Scripture Union who offered to publish but only as a children's book. Warren was insistent that his booklet be published specifically

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 28.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid. p. 9.

⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 10.

⁴⁵ '[theoretical] Models work best if you draw them...so stick with your stick men'. Mikael Krogerus and Roman Tschappeler, *The Decision Book: Fifty Models for Strategic Thinking* (London: Profile Books, 2011), p. 156; Phillip Jensen, 'Two Ways to Live', (Sydney: St Matthias Press, 1989). Tract that uses stickmen.

⁴⁶ Warren, p. 10.

for adults. He recalled 'I made it very clear, adult, working-class people who are not used to reading, so we decided to do it ourselves'.⁴⁷ In 1963 Warren took *Journey Into Life* along to the Leamington Courier to see if they could help him with getting it printed and as he recalled:

The editor happened in the mercy of God to be a very committed Christian, he was brilliant. He spent time with me, time in his own home, setting it out, improving on the graphics.⁴⁸

To start with several thousand copies were printed and distributed amongst the author's contacts.⁴⁹

Making Sense of the Cloud

The interplay between the pictures and text in the newly published *Journey Into Life* connected with its readers and the participant interviews demonstrated the ways that the text and illustrations were read and brought into meaning. May reflected at interview that 'the diagrams just say it all, you can almost do it without the text'⁵⁰ and as an eleven-year-old the picture that made 'a huge amount of sense' to him was the 'one with the cloud of sin blocking the sunlight of God'.⁵¹ This very simple picture of a person separated from God who is pictured as the sun with 'God' written in the centre and a dark cloud with the word sin just visible amongst the heavy shading that forms the cloud. The illustration is duplicated with subtle differences between the two pictures.⁵² In the first one the figure of a person is walking under the cloud with his head facing the ground almost as if he is weighed down by the cloud or perhaps even so used to it that he is just ignoring it. The text in bold type adjacent to the picture says 'Sin Separates' and the thirty-nine-word explanation below explains that 'sin is like a thick cloud' that 'blots out the sun' and 'blocks the way' to

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ The initial print run of 3,000 sold quickly. No original self-published copies are known to have survived.

⁵⁰ May, p. 12.

⁵¹ Ibid. pp. 1-2.

⁵² Employing the same methodology as children's spot the difference pictures.

God.⁵³ In the second illustration, the figure is looking upwards at the cloud with arms raised in a gesture that suggests he is trying to push at the cloud but only making a small impression on it. May's comprehension 'of not being able to do anything about it [sin] ourselves' connected with this cloud picture, as did his understanding of 'sin getting in the way and Jesus clearing the barrier'.⁵⁴ This picture enabled him to understand Jesus as 'clearing the barrier' and that through this 'our relationship with God was restored'.⁵⁵ Chester also remembered the pictures about sin separating and remembered thinking 'yes that makes sense, that makes sense' and why has 'nobody ever explained it this way before'.⁵⁶ She recalled 'I can remember like all about sin separating, I'd never understood that, it all just sort of clicked and I remember these pictures'.⁵⁷ The cloud made sense of sin.

Permeating Pictures

Wells also remembered that the pictures 'permeated deep' into him and he said that 'the cloud made a lot of sense to me at the time'.⁵⁸ For Wells, it was the 'simple commonsensical' pictures as much if not more than the text that made sense particularly the pictures of the cloud, the weeds around a neglected garden green house and the blot of ink on the book with a dripping fountain pen next to it. He felt that as 'a straight-line sort of person sin spoils, sin spreads, sin separates [...] made sense'.⁵⁹ The coin illustrations with a set of scales and the word 'justice' on one side of the coin and the word 'love' and a picture of a heart on the other side of the coin were particularly important to Chester. Chester said that 'the coins with the justice and love I'd never heard that before it's all familiar, but particularly the coin'.⁶⁰ The pass mark diagram was also remembered, 'I remember this and thinking oh yes that's how you know 100%

⁵³ Warren, p. 6.

⁵⁴ May, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 2.

⁵⁶ Chester, p. 4.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Wells, p. 2.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Chester, p. 4.

sort of thing and that making sense, yes it's very simple'.⁶¹ The 1950s-style picture of a toy robot was memorable as a picture but none of the interviewees recalled the teaching that was attached to the image. The robot picture permeated and stuck in the memory but the teaching in the text about God not making 'man a robot or a machine' by giving him freewill seemed to have been lost to the participants.⁶²

Conceptualising Faith Through Words

Whilst the pictures were clearly very important for some of the respondents it was the words as much as the pictures that made a difference to Dench's reception of the message of *Journey Into Life*. Dench explained 'I'm not really a great visual person, I like words so it would have been the words'.⁶³ He suggested that 'it might well be that it resonated with who I am and the kind of clarity of the kind of black and white thinking that perhaps I exhibit'.⁶⁴ Dench said:

I wonder if I'm in that category of young men who were searching for answers but didn't know what they all were so I was glad to be given an answer.⁶⁵

Reflecting on his reading of the booklet he felt that 'it really does contain in a nutshell certainly the evangelical perspective on what it means to have faith'.⁶⁶ He recalled 'I loved the fact that Jesus died for me' and it connected with his childhood knowledge of the hymn 'about sorrow and love flow mingled down'. He said 'Good Friday was profoundly in my understanding of the faith and it kind of struck me that I hadn't got to the point where I acknowledged my sinfulness'.⁶⁷ Even before his encounter with *Journey Into Life* Dench already had a basic soteriological understanding particularly through the Easter hymns as he recalled 'my favorite hymns were about the sacrifice of Christ and what he did

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Warren, p. 2.

⁶³ Dench, p. 9.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 16.

⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 12.

⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 9.

for us'.⁶⁸ So, by the time Dench picked up *Journey Into Life* he recognised that his understanding was 'well enough articulated in my own head' and as he recalled 'I kind of inherited the fact that God died for us all and so you know I'm fine'.⁶⁹ Significantly Dench did not mention the two pictures of Christ on the cross in *Journey Into Life* instead he talked of his intellectual engagement with the concept explained in the text of the booklet about the meaning of the sacrifice of Christ particularly as it related to him personally and he realised that for him this was the 'critical thing'.⁷⁰ Like Dench, Clements commented that his reception of the text and his ability to make sense of it was due to his pre-existing 'literacy around what Christianity is' which meant that he 'understood the language' and 'in a way intellectually, I understood what was going on here'.⁷¹ The text made sense for Clements because it offered a simple and 'very linear, logical and rational approach' to the 'problem' of sin that gave him 'a kind of clarity'.⁷² He recalled that 'I kind of got page five about the exam pass mark and the point that leading a good enough life was not good enough'. It enabled him to see that acceptance before God was 'not something that you are going to do or to achieve' and that 'you are going to have to reach out and say I need help and this is the grace of God'.⁷³

Doctrine Articulated on the Page for the First Time

King recognised that *Journey Into Life* was the 'systematic theology which I was trying to pick up and I picked it up'. He recalled that it was 'the first time I saw doctrine articulated on the page as opposed to picking it up through sermons'.⁷⁴ Coming from an evangelical home he said that 'I don't think there was [anything] particularly new to me' but what was different was that 'it was articulated clearly for the first time'.⁷⁵ This correlates with Dench's experience of having received a

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 5.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Clements, p. 15.

⁷² Ibid. p. 14.

⁷³ Ibid. p. 8.

⁷⁴ King, p. 7.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 4.

‘fair bit’ of evangelical teaching but ‘it wasn’t quite as clearly articulated as this’.⁷⁶ This is an important observation that Dench, Clements and King all identified, bringing into focus what had been blurred and fragmented knowledge by providing a very simple but complete theological framework in which the fragments could be pieced together and ordered. Chester expressed her sense of exhilaration at having her faith explained like this but also thinking to herself why ‘nobody has ever explained it this way before’. She recalled that ‘it all just sort of clicked’ and being overwhelmed by a sense of ‘yes that makes sense’.⁷⁷ Through its words and pictures this deceptively simple booklet *Journey Into Life* offered its young readers a conceptual framework that brought together their existing understanding of Christianity in a sequenced and rational way, enabling this booklet to act as an article for the transmission of faith. However not everyone who unwrapped the gift of *Journey Into Life* received it with joy and the final section of this chapter will look at two cases in the interview data that indicate a negative reception history, a rejection of the article as well as the faith that it contained.

Unwrapped but Unwanted

Hendry draws attention to way that the eighteenth and nineteenth-century British trade delegations to China presented gifts of the latest scientific inventions to create consumer demand amongst the Chinese. The Emperor of the Middle Kingdom made it clear that he did not need them or want them and told the trade delegates that ‘we have never valued ingenious articles, nor do we have the slightest need for your country’s manufactures’.⁷⁸ The Chinese took the gifts but what the British delegation failed to understand was that they were being received as ‘tributes’ and ‘homage’ as from Barbarians to a superior civilisation. The idea of an unwanted gift is not unfamiliar, with charity shops benefitting from a surfeit of unwanted presents in the post-Christmas period or

⁷⁶ Dench, p. 4.

⁷⁷ Chester, p. 4.

⁷⁸ Joy Hendry, *Wrapping Culture: Politeness, Presentation and Power in Japan and Other Societies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 3.

the employment of a prophylactic strategy for avoiding unwanted wedding gifts using an in-store wedding present list. What is less familiar is a public rejection or open hostility towards the gift in the initial exchange process with recipients being more likely to receive the gift in a polite manner and then disposing of it in a discreet way or storing it to be brought out and put on display only when the giver visits.

Reactionary Reader Response

Hurst recalled being 'stunned' and 'quite thrown' by the reaction of a person to whom he had gifted *Journey Into Life* during a home Baptism visit. Having given the booklet to a man to read at the previous visit Hurst asked him what he had made of it as he had read it. The man said 'this is just awful, it's an awful book' and when questioned said 'it's just not at all what I believe about God or about the Christian faith'.⁷⁹ Upon further questioning he said:

You know all this talk about sin and the fact that we need to say sorry for all the things we've done wrong, it's all so depressing, it's awful and I don't think of God like that at all.⁸⁰

This hostile reaction to the unwrapped gift was also in evidence in Brown's narrative as she tried to 'make sense of' and 'get a handle on' this article of faith.⁸¹ Brown remembered having the road sign leaflet 'thrust into her hand' and she said of her response that 'I either declined politely or I swore very badly at them or I took the little leaflet and I ripped it up'.⁸² She said that:

There was something deeply offensive about them trying to tell me that at the root of my problem was my lack of belief in a God who didn't seem to be doing a lot.⁸³

As with Hurst's baptismal candidate Brown reacted very negatively to the suggestion that 'it was all because of sin and all I needed to do was to repent and

⁷⁹ Hurst, p. 12.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Brown, p. 1.

⁸² Ibid. p. 5.

⁸³ Ibid.

it would all be fine'.⁸⁴ She said that she could virtually recite what they were going to say and 'later in life Brown recognised the way in which the tract 'majored on sin very [very] heavily' and that she read it as saying 'it was all my fault because I was sinful'. This was compounded by Brown's physical disability that got 'all kind of tied up with the whole thing of original sin' and she recalled that the 'only understanding I had of the whole idea of sin was that it must be all to do with me and how bad I'd been at some kind of unspecified point or that I was intrinsically bad'. Her eventual response to this gift was to 'just leave it alone' and to put it to one side in order as she said to 'preserve my sanity' as it was 'quite seriously beginning to mess with my head'.⁸⁵

The Inappropriate Gift

Not everyone who unwrapped the gift received it with joy as demonstrated above in Brown's narrative. Warren's emphasis on sin did not make sense to Brown who at this point in her life was trying to come to terms with her physical disability as well as the theological questions that this was raising. As she looked back to this time Brown thought that what she needed was someone to interpret this teaching about sin for her and the opportunity to talk it all through with somebody. This did not happen at this point in her life and it was only later in life that she revisited these questions in the awareness that 'there was still something churning in there'. Twenty-years later whilst taking classes in preparation for the Christening of her child Brown was given and politely received a booklet but when at home she found herself saying 'oh shit not again and picked up this book and just kind of threw it against the wall'. The following week she returned the gift giving it back to the Vicar, thanked him for lending it to her and when asked what she thought of it politely replied that it was 'very interesting'. For Brown, the gift of faith did not come through the gift of a booklet but through the gift of a 'conversion experience'. However, even after

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid. pp. 6-7.

this spiritual 'experience' Brown said 'I still don't understand how anybody can actually read this stuff [*Journey Into Life*] and go yeah that's for me!'.⁸⁶

The Indelible Gift

The question of whether or not a gift can ever be freely given has attracted both anthropological and theological attention,⁸⁷ but the question of whether a gift can ever be truly returned is the question to which we now turn our attention. Can a gift be received, unwrapped, read and then rewrapped and returned to the giver or even the wastepaper basket without it having any lasting impact on the recipient? Anthropologists and ethnographers are conscious that their contact and presence with unreached people-groups in their fieldwork changes things. Those people can never be the same again because of their exposure to the ethnographer even if they do not accept any gifts or keep anything that is given they have still been changed by their contact.⁸⁸ They now know about cameras, tents, shorts, shirts, boots and beer or whatever the anthropologist brings into the field. Their world will never be the same again because it has been visited and they now know that there is another world out there that has different beliefs, different values and different things. There is a sense in which the gift of *Journey Into Life* worked in a similar manner on its recipients. It is non-returnable and once opened it cannot be sent back. Like non-returnable items bought in a sale, by opening it and unwrapping it, even just reading the wrapping the recipient will not be the same again. They do not even have to keep it because something of what is read will be kept in the form of an impression on the person's memory. Just by encountering the gift the recipient willingly or unwillingly experiences some level of changed perception about Christ and the Christian faith. As we have noted for Brown the booklets left her with a sense of

⁸⁶ Ibid. pp. 9-10.

⁸⁷ Mauss; Milbank. pp. 119-161

⁸⁸ Margaret Bruchac, 'Consorting with Savages: Indigenous Informants and American Anthropologists', (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania, 2014). Anthropologists are increasingly aware of the consequences of 'savage anthropology' that has historically plundered cultures for artefacts whilst marginalising informant's contributions. In her research of North American tribes Margaret Bruchac conducts reverse [restorative] anthropology by returning to Native American communities to analyse how they were 'anthropologised', and exploring the impact of anthropologists on these Native American communities.

‘something churning in there’⁸⁹ and for the man in Hurst’s baptism visit it left a memory of anger over the booklet’s message about sin. *Journey Into Life* left its mark and it was one that as evidenced by Brown could never be entirely washed out or removed. This indelibility of the gift is a form of contagious contact that leaves a mark or an impression that sticks and cannot be removed. If the gift of *Journey Into Life* had in some way been received perhaps even just glanced at or unwrapped, read and interacted with was there an indelible marking taking place in the gift exchange process? Roman Catholic sacramental theology speaks of this indelibility of grace in the form of an indelible spiritual mark that is understood to be conferred in the sacrament of baptism. In evangelical practice contact with the gift looks to make a mark on the recipient and to leave an impression that can never be completely removed. It is in this sense that an indelible gift of grace and an indelible spiritual mark can be made merely by contact in a similar way to the sort of marks made on a culture by anthropological ethnographers amongst archaic tribes.

The Gift of Time

This indelibility of the gift *Journey Into Life* was experienced by some of the recipients as a gift that was given but only appreciated or in eschatological terms ‘realised’⁹⁰ sometime later. At the time of gifting some of the recipients were not aware of the impact that it was having on them and it was only later that they ‘realised’ the gift for themselves. As in Kerr’s case there was a time lag and a delay between the gifting and its appropriation. She said ‘I took it home, read it, I didn’t do anything with it initially’, but the booklet was doing something to

⁸⁹ Brown, p. 9.

⁹⁰ George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 3-42. In popular contemporary evangelical theology, there has been a revival of interest in ‘realised eschatology’ particularly in a pneumatology that emphasises the immediacy of the Kingdom of God as identified in specific experiences of the Holy Spirit. Walker identifies a highly realised eschatological vision as the motivating force behind the establishment of the Restoration House Church movement in the United Kingdom. Walker, pp. 137-43. For examples of ‘realised eschatology’ in the popular theology of evangelism amongst evangelicals see: Derek Morphey, *Breakthrough: Discovering the Kingdom* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishers, 1991), pp. 135-37. John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism: Signs and Wonders Today* (London: Hodder and Stoughton 1985), pp. 13-27.

her, as she said 'I still struggled with it'. Later Kerr recognised this struggle was at heart an ethical one that she put down to the things she was doing and she 'didn't want to give up'.⁹¹ Wells also recalled his delayed reaction when over a period of weeks, he 'mulled it over' going back over certain points to read and re-read it.⁹² Clements remembered 'quite distinctively waiting and waiting' over Christmas 1980 having already held onto *Journey Into Life* for a little and as he thought back to this 'month or two' spent making up his mind he said 'I don't know why'.⁹³ Ford's experience of being given *Journey Into Life* was that three different people gave the booklet to him on three separate occasions over a period of months. Eventually at the age of twenty-two he remembered thinking 'yeah it makes sense'.⁹⁴ The theological implications of these differences in the timing as well as the process of cognitive reorientation that was taking place within the participants are explored further in chapter nine particularly in relation to the distinction between 'inferential' and immediate assurance within evangelical theology.⁹⁵ However, prior to that analysis we need to attend more closely to the detail in the accounts of the participant's spiritual experience as they were given the gift of *Journey Into Life*. It is to this spirit of the gift that we now attend.

⁹¹ Kerr, p. 1.

⁹² Wells, p. 6.

⁹³ Clements, p. 2.

⁹⁴ Ford, p. 3.

⁹⁵ See chapter 9 Inferential or Immediate Assurance in *Journey Into Life*.

Chapter Six - The Spirit of The Gift of *Journey Into Life*

Spiritual Gifts

Gift exchange theory as originally conceived by Mauss, identified that the gift object or *tonga* within the Maori exchange system had a spiritual power called the *hau*.¹ Mauss drew attention to the way that in the social system of archaic societies the gift object is 'animated with the *hau* of its forest, its soil, its homeland'.² He observed that in these systems 'the thing given is not inert but is alive and often 'personified' with the *hau* or 'spirit' of the gift being perceived to 'pursue him who holds it'.³ This chapter is attentive to the animation and spiritual power of the gift *Journey Into Life* as reflected in the spiritual experience of those who received it. The spiritual power of the gift *Journey Into Life* will be looked at through an analysis of two recurring descriptive categories of 'ordinary theology' expressed by interviewees in their accounts of the spiritual phenomena surrounding the gifting of this object and article of faith.⁴ These two descriptive categories were made manifest, firstly through descriptions of 'opening the door' to Jesus, and secondly through interviewees' accounts of 'praying the prayer'. The resultant narratives of epiphany and encounter with Jesus and the Spirit will be explored as varieties of religious experience, flowing from the evangelical act of faith of 'opening the door' and 'praying the prayer' as outlined in the rubrics of *Journey Into Life*. This analysis will demonstrate the ways in which evangelical interpretations of these responses have shaped, defined and sometimes divided late twentieth-century evangelicals through their differing levels of identification with the particular spiritual phenomena springing from the evangelical act of faith as promoted in *Journey Into Life*.⁵

¹ Mauss, p. 9.

² Ibid. pp. 2-3. 'Polynesia, Melanesia, North West America and Papua'.

³ Ibid. p. 10.

⁴ Astley, p. 1. Ordinary theology understood as the God talk of believers.

⁵ The notion of the '*hau*' as employed by Marcel Mauss has received a significant critical reception over time. Claude Levi-Strauss was critical of what he saw as 'native mystification' in the use of the concept. However, as John Barclay has recently argued the notion of the '*hau*' offers

Opening the Door to Jesus

Jesus at the Door

Wood's narrative offers a description of the spiritual experience of 'opening the door' that he 'picked up from *Journey Into Life*'.⁶ His account is paradigmatic⁷ and therefore this analysis will begin by looking in detail at the narrative segment of his interview transcript where this experience of 'opening the door' is clearly visible.⁸

Jesus stands at the door and knocks, if you hear the knock, open the door, let him in. The guy evangelizing me, he reads this out to me and he says did you hear Jesus knocking and I said I think I did, and he said did you open the door? And I said well where's the door? I don't know where the door is, where's the door? And he said don't worry about where the door is, ask Jesus to break the door down. 9th of February 1975 ten o' clock, I said Jesus if it's you that's knocking and I'm not even sure it is, but if it is you knocking, could you break the door down. Light came on, the light came on like instantly, my mind, I mean I didn't have the vocabulary so I didn't understand, the light came, you know my mind was illuminated, my heart was like Aargh! And I spoke in tongues.⁹

Wood introduced this narrative segment by explaining that he 'knew the whole thing', meaning that he had read *Journey Into Life* understanding it to be suggesting that he needed to take this step of opening the door and that the explanation of Revelation 3.20 in the booklet was a precursor to this.¹⁰ In *Journey Into Life* the illustration of a hand knocking at a door is printed twice in the space of two pages. The illustration shows the hand reaching out towards the centre section of a paneled front door. The illustration is followed by the reference to Revelation 3.20 that Wood recalled as being particularly significant in his

'a valuable angle of perception' that 'captures the idea of a non-material presence in the process of gift exchange'. Levi-Strauss, pp. 45-69; Barclay, pp. 17-22.

⁶ Wood, p. 1.

⁷ Warren, p. 4. Warren had himself come to faith in this way when The Bishop of Liverpool Dr. Clifford Martin had asked 'is Jesus Christ outside the door of your life or inside, invite him in if you want to come to know him'. Warren said of this that 'in an incredible way God was speaking to me and I went home that night and asked Christ into my life'.

⁸ Riessman, p. 58. For importance of narrative segments in the analysis of narratives.

⁹ Wood, p. 1.

¹⁰ McGrath, p. 103. Evangelical 'proof texting' by 'citing isolated decontextualized verses of the Bible in support of often controversial confessional positions'. Rooted in the Reformation practice of interpreting the Bible through the 'prism of confessions and statements of faith'.

experience of opening the door. Wood was responding to the instructions in text of *Journey Into Life* that advised the reader to 'do' something and warns of not missing this 'last step' to 'accept Jesus Christ into your life to be your Lord to control you, your saviour to cleanse you, your friend to guide you and be with you'.¹¹ Wood also 'picked up' the significance of Revelation 3.20 again in response to the text that says:

Perhaps no verse in the Bible makes this last step clearer than Revelation 3.20. Jesus is speaking, Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears my voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him.¹²

Revelation 3.20 was used in all the evangelistic tracts of this era¹³ and indeed is still used in all but one contemporary major tract in this way as a preparation for the acceptance of the Christ gift by the potential believer.¹⁴ The question of exactly how Revelation 3.20 was used in *Journey Into Life* to explain to readers the process of opening the door to Christ will be examined in what follows below.

Jesus Comes In

The text of *Journey Into Life* explains Revelation 3.20 in terms of the following five-fold process that is involved in opening the door.

- 1) 'Jesus Christ waits outside the door of your life'.
- 2) 'He will not force his way in'.
- 3) 'He wants to be asked in'.
- 4) 'The handle is on the inside; only you can open the door'.
- 5) 'You become a true Christian when you open the door of your life to Jesus Christ and let him come in and live in your heart and life'.

Despite these instructions in the text, the dialogue between Wood and his friend who was guiding him through this process, showed some confusion concerning

¹¹ Warren.

¹² Warren.

¹³ Bright; E.J.H. Nash, 'Life at Its Best', (London: Scripture Union, 1964); John R.W. Stott, 'Becoming a Christian', (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1950); Maurice A.P. Wood, 'How Can I Find God?', (London: Islington Booklets, 1954).

¹⁴ The 'Chick Tract' series by Jack T. Chick is the only major tract writer who does not use Revelation 3.20. see Jack T. Chick, 'Your Best Life', (Ontario California: Chick Publications, 2014).

how to take these specific steps involved in opening the door. To help Wood and to facilitate the process, his friend asked two key questions, firstly, 'did you hear Jesus knocking?' and secondly, 'did you open the door?'.¹⁵ Wood's answer 'I think so' showed that he was unsure and his further question 'where's the door' also revealed that he was not able to open the door because he did not know the location of the door. His friend told James not to worry where the door was and instead he instructed him to 'ask Jesus to break the door down'. Wood tentatively asked Jesus [in prayer] to do this, prefixing his request with the words 'I'm not even sure it is but if it is you knocking could you break the door down'. In describing the resultant experience, Wood recalled that 'instantly a light came on' and he described his mind as being 'illuminated' with his 'heart' being impacted all accompanied by a spontaneous utterance in 'tongues'.¹⁶

After describing this initial experience in terms of receiving Jesus, the language that Wood then used to describe this was that of the 'Holy' Spirit and 'The Spirit' who had been received by him.¹⁷ The salvific experience of Jesus coming in was immediately conflated with the language of the reception of the Spirit, so that the language of receiving Jesus and receiving the Spirit were used interchangeably. Wood brought together the experience of the light coming on and spiritual illumination with the arrival of Jesus through the door. The phrase the 'Spirit comes in and now he's got understanding' is used interchangeably with the experience of meeting Jesus through the open door.¹⁸ When questioned about this ambiguity concerning the arrival of God as either Jesus or the Spirit, Wood referred back to the resurrection and ascension discourse in John's gospel,¹⁹ pointing out that because Jesus is now at the right hand of the Father and because 'in bodily form he can only be in one place at one time' it is 'the spirit of Jesus' who arrives through the door.²⁰

¹⁵ Wood, p. 1.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 7.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 8.

¹⁹ John chapter 14

²⁰ Wood, p. 12.

In contrast to Wood's dramatic 'open door' experience, Chester was alone in her room reading *Journey Into Life* and without a conscious effort 'really felt that Jesus was there with me, just me reading the booklet in my bedroom by myself, really felt Jesus was there'.²¹ However in her reflection on this experience, Chester, like Wood, drew on a more developed Trinitarian vocabulary and understanding in explanation that it was 'the Holy Spirit bringing this alive'.²² She said 'I think the Holy Spirit was working in my heart that God was calling me' and that 'this was the time of the Holy Spirit speaking to me through it and God calling me'.²³ Not only did Chester speak of experiencing Jesus and the Holy Spirit as being there, she also said that 'God's presence was there'²⁴ and 'it was God speaking to me through it',²⁵ thus indicating a more developed Trinitarian perspective on the experience of opening the door. These experiences of Wood and Chester show just two of the ways in which the instructions in the text of *Journey Into Life* were interpreted and acted upon. However, for others this last step of opening the door to Jesus Christ to 'let him come in and live in your life'²⁶ was more of a protracted process rather than an immediate and instantaneous phenomena, and there was a considerable amount of struggle and resistance in the process of taking this step of faith and praying the prayer.

Praying the Prayer

Struggle, Resistance and Procrastination

The 'last step'²⁷ before praying the prayer was shown in the interview data to be a surprisingly drawn out process, marked by considerable struggle, resistance and procrastination. To help understand this it is important to look at both the persuasive words of the text of *Journey Into Life* at this last step, as well as the ways in which the readers interacted with them in the process of coming to a

²¹ Chester, pp. 5-7.

²² Ibid. p. 11.

²³ Ibid. p. 13.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 21.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 13.

²⁶ Warren, p. 11.

²⁷ Ibid.

decision to pray the prayer. In order to direct readers towards this last step

Journey Into Life asks readers three questions:

1. Have you ever taken this step?
2. Is Christ outside your life or inside?
3. Will you let him in or keep him out?

Questions one and two are interrupted being interleaved with a further explanation that 'perhaps you have never realised before that there is anything for you to do', as well as a reminder of the opening questions on the first page of the booklet summarised as 'you can be baptised, confirmed, go to church, yes even read the Bible and pray, and still leave Jesus Christ outside the door of your life'. Following this and prior to questions two and three the reader is exhorted to 'face this question honestly'.²⁸ This appeal for honest action is then intensified with an illustration of a big hand, a cowering human figure and a cloud between them, with the word sin written in it. This illustration is juxtaposed with words of warning about the potential consequences of failing to 'take this step' and the warning is threefold. Firstly, 'you cannot ignore Christ's invitation for ever, secondly, 'time is running out' and thirdly, 'if you ignore him and reject him now, at the day of judgment, when we must all stand before him, he will ignore and reject you'. It is then proof texted with an unreferenced Biblical quote that reads 'I do not know you, depart from me'.²⁹ Thus, the illustration is explained in the figure's posture with back turned, rejecting the hand of God and therefore continuing to be separated by the cloud of sin.

Kerr found these directions made sense to her, but even so for her there was no immediate and dramatic change for she 'struggled' with the fact that she 'didn't want to give up' some of the things she was doing to follow Jesus.³⁰ She said that 'it demanded change from what I was doing and a complete turn-around', as well as an 'acceptance that what I was doing was wrong'.³¹ For her the message of this section of *Journey Into life* 'was very clear [that] this is wrong

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Paraphrase of Matthew 7.23

³⁰ Kerr, p. 1.

³¹ Ibid. p. 2.

and this is what you should be doing or shouldn't be doing and it's a turning around'.³² Kerr said 'I didn't want to say the prayer until I'd made the decision to end what I was doing'.³³ Because of this struggle her initial response after reading *Journey Into Life* was not to do anything and it took a few weeks before she felt in a right position to pray the prayer. Clements also took a considerable amount of time over this step in the booklet. He remembered waiting a month or two after he had made up his mind he was going to do this. He said 'I remember quite distinctively waiting and waiting and I don't know why I did'.³⁴ Dench was 'frightened' as he considered praying the prayer particularly the implications of the text 'every part of your life, your work, friendships, time, money, all must come under his control'.³⁵ He said that:

Although I wasn't a rebel raiser or party goer, if I was going to pray the prayer I really knew that it was really going to change my life, I knew I was going to have to change.

He said 'I knew that I eventually would pray the prayer I just had to get myself into a position where I was ready to accept change'.³⁶ King also reported a sense of struggle at this point as he said 'I was resisting what this was telling me', not due to the potential ethical implications, but because of his theological wrestling and resistance to the notion that he had to participate in what he described as this 'evangelical act of faith'.³⁷ He said 'I thought I was a Christian, I thought I'd always been a Christian', and therefore he found himself resisting the idea that he should pray a prayer because, as he said 'I prayed all the time, I don't think it made any difference because I'd always prayed'.³⁸

Thoughtful Decisions for Christ

The conjunctive 'but', in the last paragraph of page eleven in *Journey Into Life*, abruptly halts the flow of the negative consequences of refusing to take this

³² Ibid. p. 4.

³³ Ibid. p. 2.

³⁴ Clements, p. 2.

³⁵ Dench, pp. 6-10.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 7.

³⁷ King, p. 3.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 5.

step, with the renewed offer to the reader ‘thoughtfully to open the door of your life to Jesus Christ’.³⁹ As already indicated the interview data demonstrates a significant level of premeditation, struggle and thought in the experience of research participants and whilst some were encouraged to pray ‘there and then’, the main reader response was to act as instructed by the author to ‘find a place where you can be quiet and alone’.⁴⁰ It is noteworthy that Warren adopted this approach despite his involvement with the popular mass evangelistic rallies that were taking place at the time during which people were called out to the front to make spontaneous public declarations of faith.⁴¹ The inclusion by Warren of the ‘persuasive words’ and the development of a more decision-orientated style than the one used in earlier conservative evangelical tracts, may well have been due to the pervasive influence of the Billy Graham Missions on Warren and his contemporaries during their time as undergraduates at Cambridge. John Pollock’s historical research supports this view of the influence of Billy Graham on Cambridge University students. He described Graham’s week-long mission as:

Undoubtedly the most outstanding in impact on the university, and in numbers who sought counselling and affirmed decision to trust in the living Christ, since D.L.Moody’s historic mission in 1882.⁴²

Despite this more persuasive influence of the Graham missions the ‘sobering thoughts’ and warning against ‘irresponsible emotion’ as evidenced in Stott’s tract were not abandoned by Warren in *Journey Into Life*.⁴³ Following the pattern of the older evangelical tracts where the reader was asked to ‘pause to consider thoughtfully the implications’, Warren adopted this approach that drew on the observation that Jesus ‘constantly discouraged people from following him if they

³⁹ Warren, p. 11.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Warren. Norman Warren acknowledged the influence of the Billy Graham Missions having been ‘encouraged by the simple preaching and teaching of the Gospels’. Through this he became familiar with the more persuasive style of the Billy Graham Missions particularly in the ‘follow up’ groups where ‘decisions for Christ’ were affirmed and reinforced. Billy Graham had been the CICCUMissioner in 1955 as well as leading ‘Crusades’ at Wembley Stadium in May 1955 that attracted fifty to sixty thousand people every night. Barclay, p. 80.

⁴² John Pollock, *Billy Graham: The Authorised Biography* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1966), pp. 202-09. ‘The sharp rise in the number of ordinands [of whom Norman Warren was one] and of recruits to missionary societies owed much to the crusades’.

⁴³ Stott, p. 13.

were in danger of being swept into his allegiance by irresponsible emotion'.⁴⁴

The consequent injunction in the text of *Journey Into Life* to 'find a place where you can be quiet and alone' was one that found a deep resonance with nearly all the interviewees.⁴⁵

Alone in a Quiet Place

Kerr was one who welcomed this instruction and it was very important to her that this step was made alone. She said 'I was on my own, I lived on my own and didn't want to do it with anybody else and I gave my life to Jesus completely on my own'.⁴⁶ Chester emphasised her being alone as she said it 'was just me reading the booklet in my bedroom by myself'.⁴⁷ Wells and Ford also remembered that they went into their bedrooms and knelt. Similarly, Clements said 'I wanted privacy' and his approach was 'all utterly low key' and 'private'. He remembered 'going to bed at night and in the privacy of my own bedroom reading that and then kneeling down by the side of my bed'.⁴⁸ King said 'I prayed it on my own I didn't tell anybody' and Dench found solitude 'behind the armchair' in his sitting room.⁴⁹ Even Hurst who was led through this step by one of the leaders on the Christian Camp recalled that 'I went away and read it so that I could fully understand the commitment that I'd made'.⁵⁰ All these quiet and private decisions evidenced a strong trend away from the more public and emotional responses of the rally.

Saying the Prayer

Evangelicalism is frequently identified in the public arena by its casual form of expression and as a turn away from formal or liturgical set prayers with its emphasis on the spontaneity and creative freedom of the individual to make

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Warren, p. 11.

⁴⁶ Kerr, p. 2.

⁴⁷ Chester, p. 7.

⁴⁸ Clements, pp. 2-6.

⁴⁹ King, p. 4; Dench, p. 6.

⁵⁰ Hurst, p. 4.

their own prayers. In a way, reminiscent of the Eastern Orthodox 'Jesus Prayer',⁵¹ the evangelical prayer of commitment has become the definitive prayer of global evangelicalism, often referred to as the 'sinner's prayer'. It has developed as a means of enabling the person praying [the sinner] to make a connection with God. *Journey Into Life* introduces its version of the 'sinner's prayer', with the text offering the rubric 'it might help you to say the prayer phrase by phrase, quietly, thoughtfully, thinking carefully what you are saying and what you are doing'.⁵² The prayer is headed with an illustration of praying hands and then is written out in full to be prayed by the recipient as follows:

Lord Jesus Christ,
 I know I have sinned in my thoughts, words, and actions.
 There are so many things I have not done,
 There are so many sinful things I have done.
 I am sorry for my sins and turn from everything I know to be wrong.
 I know you gave your life upon the cross for me.
 Gratefully I give my life back to you.
 Now I ask you to come into my life.
 Come in as my Saviour to cleanse me,
 Come in as my Lord to control me,
 Come in as my friend to be with me,
 And I will serve you all the remaining years of my life in complete obedience. *Amen*.⁵³

The way that research participants recalled their experience of saying this prayer of commitment played a significant role in the development of the participant's faith stories as revealed in the narratives of encounter.

The Prayer with Immediate Results

This signature evangelical act of faith expressed in the decision to say this prayer was central to these research narratives, as demonstrated by Ford who remembered reading the prayer of commitment in *Journey Into Life*. He said, 'I started saying the prayer and I said it about twice and then I said it a third time

⁵¹ Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Cambridge: James Clarke 2005), p. 210.

⁵² Warren, pp. 12-13.

⁵³ Warren, p. 13.

and I remembered I looked up' and then moving beyond the set prayer to make his own intercessions he recalled, 'I said look, if you are really there Jesus, if you are for real, then help me'⁵⁴ and that led onto him having a visionary experience of Jesus. Having prayed this prayer, he said:

I could see Jesus standing in front of me with the holes in his hands the wounds in his hands. Now, whether it was in my mind or a vision I can't tell you, but I'll tell you that this happened thirty-five years ago and it was like yesterday.⁵⁵

Ford said that following this:

I was just aware gradually [of] God being there, God loving me God hearing my prayers and just the realization that I couldn't make myself into a Christian.

He said that following this 'I stopped trying to make myself into a Christian, in a sense I let go emotionally, I encountered Jesus'.⁵⁶ Wells also reported an immediate effect, as he recalled getting to the end of praying the prayer on his knees and he knew that 'something had happened', and that 'it all made sense that it all fitted together okay'.⁵⁷ However, not all the participants reported such an immediate spiritual experience.

The Prayer with Thoughtful Responses

For others, such as May, the process of praying the prayer was not accompanied by any immediate 'epiphany,' but was more akin to the tone of rubric of introduction to the prayer in *Journey Into Life*. He said that 'the prayer at that time, as a twelve-year-old, was a conscious decision to make that step'.⁵⁸ Coming from a Congregational church background he was aware that 'it was part of the process of coming to faith' and an 'ongoing life commitment'. He recognised that by thoughtfully and sincerely praying this prayer he was at the same time making a commitment to Christ and to his congregational church for whom this act of

⁵⁴ Ford, p. 3.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 4.

⁵⁷ Wells, p. 6.

⁵⁸ May, p. 5.

decision in praying the prayer was the signifying act in the process of being invited into full membership of his church. May realised that for him in his congregational church context his praying the prayer was not only 'recognising something about personal faith', but it was also his ticket to full membership in his church 'by profession of faith'. Hurst's account of his decision to pray the prayer also demonstrated that this was a calculated decision, based on his understanding of and realisation that he had to make a choice and that it was not something that would happen by accident'.⁵⁹ He said it was 'the clearest time I had to understand what I was committing myself to and I had to pray the prayer'. Although nothing seemed to take place at the time, Hurst was particularly aware of the significance of inviting 'the Lord to control' as he said:

I had made a decision on that day that would change my life because my life would no longer be my own as it were where it would be in God's hands.⁶⁰

As with May there was recognition in Hurst's account of praying the prayer that by taking this step he was engaged in more than a personal and private decision as he realised that it 'represented joining in with this big community of Christians who all believed much the same thing'.⁶¹ Kerr identified her evangelical faith as being centered around her thoughtful, calm and solitary decision to say this prayer recalling that 'it's the prayer more than anything in here that I relate to'.⁶² She remembered the date and the particular evening when she decided that saying this prayer was what she 'needed to do and wanted to do'. She said 'I've never forgotten it, I can remember, I can see myself doing it'.⁶³ She saw that praying the prayer enabled her 'to make a choice'⁶⁴ to 'end' what she was doing and to 'start anew'. It was a defining moment in Kerr's life, with a clear decision to make 'a complete turnaround'.⁶⁵ Clements also highlighted the importance of the day and the date that he decided in a very thoughtful way to kneel down by

⁵⁹ Hurst, p. 5.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 6.

⁶¹ Ibid. p. 7.

⁶² Kerr, p. 3.

⁶³ Ibid. p. 5.

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 10.

⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 2.

the side of his bed and pray the prayer before going to sleep. He said, 'at the moment in which I said that prayer it felt to me like all I was doing was just sealing a deal that I thought I had already sealed'.⁶⁶ He didn't know what it would lead to 'if anything' but he said 'I did feel the need of the conviction to pray' and that once he had prayed the prayer he said 'I felt calmness I felt a calm for having done it and went to bed'.⁶⁷ For Dench, the prayer was 'the pivotal thing'⁶⁸ and he was particularly aware of the implications that 'if I was going to pray this prayer, I really knew that it was going to change my life'.⁶⁹ Having read the prayer through several times he thought carefully about the text which he was still able to paraphrase as 'come in as my Lord to control me and my friend to be with me'. Indeed, he was 'frightened to pray the prayer' because of his sense that if he prayed it his life would be 'changed forever'. He said:

It got to the point where you have either got to say yes this is true and you take that step over the line, it really was like the rubicon there is no going back.⁷⁰

Having taken this step and prayed the prayer Dench reported experiencing a 'real sense of well-being and peace'.⁷¹ Chester had also thought very carefully through the implications of praying the prayer and was particularly aware that 'it was a decision not just for now'. She said that 'to me the biggest thing was that I was giving my life to Jesus for him to lead me or go wherever he wanted me to go'. In praying the prayer 'that's what I determined what I was doing so I finished it went downstairs gave it to my mum and dad and expected them to read it'.⁷²

Receiving the Spirit of The Gift

Varieties of Religious Experience

The spiritual phenomena of epiphany and encounter with Jesus and the Spirit following the gifting and reception of *Journey Into Life* through opening the door

⁶⁶ Clements, p. 2.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Dench, p. 8.

⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 6.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid. p. 8.

⁷² Chester, p. 7.

to Jesus and praying the prayer, are now be explored as varieties of religious experience flowing from the evangelical act of faith as outlined in *Journey Into Life*. The resulting analysis demonstrates the ways in which emphasis on particular aspects of these experiences of the evangelical act of faith as expressed in *Journey Into Life* have shaped, defined and divided late twentieth-century evangelicals through their differing levels of identification with these spiritual phenomena. As originally identified in James' work, different levels or as he called them 'varieties' of spiritual experience can be placed on a continuum from immediate and dramatic experiences at one end, to slower and almost non-experiential realisation at the other.⁷³ The experience of the author of *Journey Into Life* is a good starting point for this analysis, as it reflected not only Warren's personal experience but also the very low key approach adopted by mid-twentieth-century conservative evangelicals that reacted to a perceived evangelical emotionalism by playing down the role of feelings and experiences in the reception of the gift, whilst emphasising the place of rational thought. Warren's own experience was not without an emotional element as he recalled being 'gripped' by a talk about how a person could come to know God in a personal way and feeling as if he was the only one in that hall and that 'in some incredible way God was speaking' to him. Having gone home that night he asked Christ into his life and his memory of this was that 'there was nothing shattering except that [he had] a tremendous sense of I belong'.⁷⁴ When writing *Journey Into Life* Warren adopted this very 'low key' approach to spiritual experience as favoured by the evangelical 'Argo' at the time. As we have seen in the earlier chapter the cultural influence on Conservative Evangelicalism from camps and public schools, Christianity was particularly strong in teaching of the conservative evangelical movement leader John Stott. Motivated by a conviction that Christianity must be presented as 'intellectually respectable',⁷⁵ Stott's tract laid

⁷³ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Renaissance Classic, 2012), p. 84. William James described the slower forms of religious experience as 'chronic' and the more immediate ones as 'acute'.

⁷⁴ Warren, p. 4.

⁷⁵ Chapman, p. 502.

out a 'cerebral'⁷⁶ 'noetic'⁷⁷ approach towards spiritual experience with a constant emphasis on the mind and thoughtful responses and warning against the 'danger of being swept into his allegiance by irresponsible emotion'.⁷⁸ *Journey Into Life* followed this convention with 'suggestions' to the person praying the prayer 'not [to] worry if you do not feel any different', thereby not building any specific expectation of immediate spiritual experience following opening the door to Jesus. After the prayer *Journey Into Life* says 'don't rely on your feelings, you may not feel any different at the moment',⁷⁹ directing the reader towards a rationalistic rather than experiential strategy, to 'trust his sure promise', an instruction reinforced with three scriptural texts intended to reassure the respondent in the absence of religious feelings.⁸⁰

Cognitive Convictions

Herne's narrative demonstrates a cognitive and rationalistic rather than emotional and experiential response to *Journey Into Life*. Herne's account is striking because her language reflects an intellectual rather than emotional decision with an emphasis on the importance of the booklet's 'clear explanation' and the way that through reading *Journey Into Life* her 'understanding' was enlarged.⁸¹ She said that her 'understanding of how intimate the relationship could be in terms of one to one child of God took time to develop'⁸² and what reading *Journey Into Life* did was to 'underline and clarify'⁸³ her understanding so that she was able to 'understand simply and clearly', rather than as she said having 'gone away with a sort of fuzzy warm yes I think I'm a Christian feeling without knowing to do anything else'.⁸⁴ This narrative reflects very clearly the conservative evangelical hermeneutic of suspicion surrounding emotionalism

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ James, p. 280. 'Noetic Quality – states of insights into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. They are illuminations, revelations, full of significance and importance, all inarticulate though they remain'.

⁷⁸ Stott, p. 13.

⁷⁹ Warren, p. 14.

⁸⁰ Revelation 3.20, John 6.47, Matthew 28.20

⁸¹ Herne, p. 2.

⁸² Ibid. p. 8.

⁸³ Ibid. p. 18.

⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 9.

and its reactionary 'cataphatic'⁸⁵ emphasis on promoting understanding as one of the primary ways to know God, thus following Stott who said that the 'greatest enemy' of the Christian faith was to be identified as 'muddle-headedness' and an absence of 'clear understanding'.⁸⁶ In later generic tracts, this emphasis on the primacy of understanding with a corresponding subordination of experience and emotion was illustrated by a train locomotive with the word 'fact' written in it, pulling two carriages with the words 'faith' in the first one and 'feelings' in the last carriage.⁸⁷

Clements' narrative demonstrates the way that his cognitive experience of faith 'came at the right moment'. Nine months after 'sealing a deal' with a very matter of fact low key intellectual response he went up to Emmanuel College Cambridge and quickly tapped into Conservative evangelical networks such as the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union listening to the preaching of Stott and Roy Clements at Eden Baptist Church. Clements used the phrase 'profession of faith' to describe his experience of praying the prayer not to minimise it, but to emphasise the calculated, thoughtful and long term nature of his decision. It was important to him that he 'really understood' what he was doing and he understood that by praying the prayer he was making 'a clear commitment' and 'a demonstration of faith'. His immediate experience was a sense of calm but looking back on the decision thirty-four years later he could say that he 'didn't really realise how dynamite that was to pray the prayer' and he said 'I had no appreciation of just how big that would turn out to be having prayed that prayer'. In interview Clements said that he 'hadn't thought of it like this before', but in the process of recollection, he could see it in terms of the parable of the sower, in the way that 'in this event the seed had been sown, and the seed bed was prepared and waiting' for him in his going up to Cambridge aged eighteen, where his faith grew very quickly.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Knowledge of God obtained through defining God with positive statements. Opposite of 'apophatic' where knowledge of God is sought through emptying the mind of words and ideas.

⁸⁶ Stott, p. 3.

⁸⁷ Bright, p. 14.

⁸⁸ Clements, pp. 2-11.

A Gift in Time

Clements' narrative was not the only one to highlight an important question of time and timing. Hurst said that for him 'it was the clearest time' of his early life and a 'very special period of time', marked by clarity of thought about God, but also a general sense that this was an especially significant time in his life spiritually.⁸⁹ Brown's experience of rejecting the representation of God in *Journey Into Life* at this time in her life as a teenager but experiencing the gift of the spirit at a different time many years later, showed the importance of timing and time in the process of spiritual experience. Unlike the other respondents in this research, Brown's experience was more akin to a *via negativa* at this time in her life as she rejected the God that she was conceptualising through the presentation of *Journey Into Life*. At interview she reflected that she 'now recognised that God wouldn't kind of leave it alone because there was still something kind of churning in there'.⁹⁰ For the other interviewees, this was a different kind of season and time when they were particularly aware of divine activity in and around their lives, with May and Chester speaking about prevenient spiritual activity experienced prior to praying the prayer. May recalled that he had a profound experience of the Holy Spirit even before the camp started just kneeling on the ground in his tent.⁹¹ Prior to praying the prayer Chester found that the experience of just reading *Journey Into Life* brought a feeling that 'Jesus was there' with her. She said that her prior awareness of Jesus in her childhood enabled her to identify this feeling that it was Jesus who 'was there'. She said 'I'd known Jesus with me as a child I used to pray every night by myself' and it was this previous experience that enabled her to identify the feeling of Jesus being in the room as she was reading *Journey Into Life*. Reflecting on this Chester explained that 'the Holy Spirit was working in my heart. God was calling me and this was the time to respond to that call'. She said that she believed it 'was the time' of the Holy Spirit speaking to her through *Journey Into Life* and that God was calling her and bringing her back to her childhood faith.⁹²

⁸⁹ Hurst, p. 5.

⁹⁰ Brown, pp. 5-7.

⁹¹ May, p. 7.

⁹² Chester, pp. 5-13.

Acute Spiritual Experiences

Despite Warren's disclaimer and warning not to rely on feelings because 'you may not feel any different at the moment', one third of the sample recounted 'acute' spiritual experiences.⁹³ Dench 'really felt' the 'powerful impact' of praying the prayer, recalling it as 'a profound spiritual experience' where he 'felt a warmth flowing through' him, and 'a peace that now I can talk about the peace that transcends all understanding'. He described it as 'clearly a spiritual thing' that was accompanied by a kind of warmth washing over him and giving him 'a real sense of well-being and peace'.⁹⁴ Wells' experience of praying the prayer brought with it a 'supernatural tingling' just below his sternum, and he said that this spiritual experience 'wasn't just a good feeling' and neither was it describable physiologically in any way. He said 'I wasn't hot, I wasn't tired, I didn't drop off to sleep, I was fully aware, I realised that it was a manifestation of the Holy Spirit'.⁹⁵ Ford recalled that whilst praying the prayer he had a visionary experience and 'encounter' with Jesus. He said that he couldn't tell me whether it was in his mind's eye or whether it was a vision but he said 'I could see Jesus standing in front of me with holes in his hands, the wounds in his hands'. Ford explained that this experience seemed to have happened to him after he 'stopped trying' to make himself a Christian and as he said 'I let go emotionally I encountered Jesus'. This was in 1980 and he said that what was 'astonishing' was that the vision was still there for him in his mind's eye as if it were yesterday.⁹⁶ Wood recalled that his 'epiphany came thorough this' when to his surprise as he prayed the prayer 'the light came on'. He said that 'the light came on like instantly my mind was illuminated my heart was like Aargh and I spoke in tongues'. Wood interpreted this experience in terms of receiving the Spirit who then gave him spiritual understanding that had previously been unavailable to him. He said 'when the Holy Spirit comes into our lives it's the Spirit that gives us

⁹³ Warren, p. 14.

⁹⁴ Dench, pp. 7-12.

⁹⁵ Wells, p. 6.

⁹⁶ Ford, pp. 3-4.

understanding'. His understanding of his spiritual experience prioritised the coming of the Spirit as a precursor to receiving divine illumination in terms of clear intellectual understanding. Wood backed this up with a reference to John 3.5-7 and Jesus's image of being born again by water and the Spirit saying that 'if you are not born of water and the Spirit you are not going to discover this new life'. Wood's emphasis on the Holy Spirit was the most pronounced of all the research participants which was surprising as he came to pray the prayer through the ministry of a conservative rather than Charismatic or Pentecostal youth group at Christ Church, North Finchley. This was at the time the epicenter of the growing CYFA group movement run by the curate and Limsfield house-party leader Kenneth Habbershon. Wood's spiritual experience, particularly his speaking in tongues, happened before its widespread adoption in evangelicalism through the mainstream charismatic movement in the 1980s, but his story shows that although not encouraged it was present within conservative evangelicalism at grass roots and youth group level.⁹⁷ What is notably absent in this and the other narratives is any mention of spiritual experiences of healing, deliverance or miracles that would be a common feature of many evangelical conversion narratives today. However, for a tradition rooted in the knowable and explainable with an emphasis on intellectual assent, these experiential spiritual phenomena were visible but deemphasised and played down in the context of conservative evangelicalism's desire for 'intellectual conquest' that required a distancing of itself from fundamentalism and revivalism.⁹⁸ Talk of 'lights coming on' and 'supernatural tingling' was not the way forward in the promotion of the intellectual respectability that was being sought by the conservative evangelical leaders at the time.⁹⁹

The artefact *Journey Into Life* reflected the mid-twentieth-century conservative evangelical faith communities' approach to spiritual epiphany which avoided talk of supernatural, immanent, mystical and cataphatic experience. However, these research narratives gave a glimpse of ordinary

⁹⁷ Wood, pp. 1-31.

⁹⁸ Chapman, p. 16.

⁹⁹ Ibid. p. 48.

evangelical spiritual experience and spiritual power that was outside this normative conservative framework, with its post-enlightenment rational worldview and suspicion of experience. Evangelicalism in its modernist form, focused on what one could understand and what one could say, but here we have evidence of a much more 'noetic' type of spiritual experience within the camp. Reflecting a Cartesian subject object dualism of not trusting anything other than what can be known and thinking that the whole of Christianity is encapsulated in the knowable and the rational, *Journey Into life* reflects an evangelical faith that became about what one can understand and what one can know. Following its Reformation heritage spiritual life was accessed by belief in the heart and confession with the mouth thus moving it away from a faith characterized by mystical devotional to one where faith became a rational exercise in a modern world.

However, as we shall see in the next chapter, evangelical Protestantism may have rejected the objects of mystical devotion in favour of texts designed and distributed to bring cognitive, rational and intellectual understanding but in the process left a noetic vacuum that needed to be filled. Devoid of devotional material objects and needing material things, evangelicals developed their own system of contemporary icons, relics, religious souvenirs and articles of faith that offered invisible, intangible, un-noetic faith something tangible and material to hold onto. *Journey Into Life* became one of the most iconic articles of evangelical faith assuming a meaning and a role beyond its original textual intentions. *Journey Into Life* acted as a relic, icon and souvenir of faith, offering the evangelical believer a material touchstone and physical reassurance of their spiritual life in a rationalistic and material modern world. It is to this role of *Journey Into Life* as relic, icon and souvenir that we now turn.

Chapter Seven - Souvenir, Relic and Icon of Evangelical Faith

Keeping Faith

The research interview data revealed the significant ongoing and lifelong attachment of the participants to the article of faith *Journey Into Life* as a symbol of remembrance and a physical object of faith to hold onto. There was a sense of nostalgic attachment with *Journey Into Life* being fondly regarded as an object that had been kept and held onto even to the extent that treasured original copies had become highly valued artefacts, articles and icons of faith. *Journey Into Life* became a precious souvenir of faith having not been discarded merely as ephemeral paper, but kept safe, travelling with its owners for over forty years and assuming a role akin to a traditional religious relic. This enduring haptic relationship with the material object articulated a desire to hold onto the original experiences, beliefs and memories of spiritual encounter that had been characteristic of the participant's initial engagement with the artefact. *Journey Into Life* was something to go back to, important, authoritative, a solid reminder providing reassurance of what it meant to be a Christian particularly in times of uncertainty and doubt. The interviews revealed *Journey Into Life* functioning not only at an individual level but also corporately within the evangelical 'Argo' where it became part of evangelical iconography ubiquitously present on its bookstalls and coffee tables at the back of evangelical churches. The 'road sign' tract became part of evangelical iconography providing an immediately identifiable visual and material marker of church identity within the expanding evangelical ecclesial movement. This chapter examines the narratives of evangelicals whose individual and corporate use of the artefact *Journey Into Life* functioned to create and maintain evangelical identity and faith through the adoption of this tract as a souvenir, relic and icon of faith.

Journey Into Life as an Evangelical Souvenir

A Place Once Visited

It is important to emphasise at the inception of this analysis of *Journey Into Life* as a souvenir that this is not intended to trivialise or in any way to diminish the importance of the artefact itself. Material culture studies and anthropological gift exchange researchers have demonstrated the way that the analysis of souvenirs, however seemingly trivial or disposable, facilitate important insights into the functioning of specific cultural and religious systems acting as ‘windows onto a particular religious world’.¹ Hendry’s research into Japanese souvenirs called *omiyage* draws attention to the role that the souvenir plays in bringing back from the journey not necessarily something valuable, but an article that carries with it a sense of the place that has been visited. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, *Journey Into Life* is a souvenir of a spiritual place that was visited by participants on their spiritual journey. Japanese *omiyage* are often purchased on journeys to shrines and temples and are understood to form ‘magical links’ and ‘conduits’ that have the capacity to bring back sacred power.² This deeper meaning of a souvenir may be lost in the last-minute gifting of a kitsch object such as a cheap yellow plastic banana harmonica³ after a visit to the Canary Islands or a mass produced plastic Eiffel Tower from a trip to Paris, but in relation to the research participants who held onto and treasured *Journey Into Life* over many years, it helps to explain something of the way that it pointed people back to a spiritually significant place on their own journey into life.

The appropriation of *Journey Into Life* by May revealed some of the similarities between the purchase of the tract and the purchase of an ordinary souvenir. May appeared at interview with the souvenir in the form of the actual copy of *Journey Into Life* that he bought on a Scripture Union Summer Camp at West Runton in 1970. He referred to *Journey Into Life* as ‘precious’ to him because, as he said ‘this is the booklet that I went through and prayed the prayer

¹ McDannell, p. 3.

² Hendry, p. 34.

³ Ward, p. 94.

that led me to Christ'.⁴ Surprisingly May was not offered *Journey Into Life* as a free gift, but had to purchase it. He said that the reason he purchased it was because he 'was attracted to *Journey Into Life*', it resonated with him, so he bought it for four new pence from the little bookstall in the camp in a similar manner to the child who buys a souvenir with his holiday pocket money. Its role as a religious souvenir became particularly apparent in May's narrative. Having kept his copy in good condition it had gone with him from his parents' home 'to single life and to married life, to being a father and grandfather' and in his recollection of 'occasions when I have flicked through it for sentimental reasons'.⁵ This power of the souvenir to bring back something of the original experience was also apparent in the interview with Chester. She said that even in the process of just seeing the research participant advert at a Christian Summer Festival and in her preparation for the research interview, she felt an 'excitement' about telling her story and the interview preparations had been the 'catalyst' that as she said 'got me thinking back' to the original experience of *Journey Into Life*.⁶ Reflecting on this at interview Chester repeatedly described *Journey Into Life* as a 'precious' gift that was carried in her handbag for years until it got too 'tatty'.⁷ This research interview demonstrated the way that as a souvenir *Journey Into Life* was able not only to bring back a memory but served in the present as a 'catalyst' for further theological reflection on her ongoing faith journey, causing Chester to reconsider her 'story' as part of her preparation for ordination.⁸

Imaginative Reconstructions of the Past

As a souvenir *Journey Into Life* offered a selective and idealised memory of an important place on Chester's spiritual journey, but as she started to review her *Journey Into Life* story and to integrate it in her total life narrative, she began to reconfigure her original story that she had been telling up until the interview. As

⁴ May, p. 8.

⁵ Ibid. pp. 9-12.

⁶ Chester, p. 6.

⁷ Ibid. pp. 9-11.

⁸ Field notes following interview with Chester. St John's College, Durham University. 16.9.2015

McDannell observed in her study of religious souvenirs, memory is not a static phenomenon but 'active and constructive' and 'rather than being a storehouse from which images and feelings can be retrieved at will, it is an imaginative reconstruction of pieces of the past'.⁹ The process of seeing, touching, holding and looking again at the souvenir object *Journey Into Life* enabled Chester to realise that her memory and the story that she had been telling about the booklet needed revision. As McDannell points out 'through memory we try to recapture an authentic past; however since the past is changed through remembering we cannot truly remember it'.¹⁰ Chester's contemporary context of training for ordination in the Anglican Church had involved her revisiting and, to some extent, reconstructing her faith narrative. The souvenir embodied memories but her original narrative constructed around *Journey Into Life* was now undergoing reconstruction in the light of this recent reconsideration of her faith journey. This reconfiguration and reconstruction of memory continued to take place in the interview itself, as it brought to the surface long dormant memories of childhood faith. She was now beginning to see *Journey Into Life* not just in terms of the beginning of her faith journey but as an 'inking in' of her childhood faith.¹¹

The Souvenir in Constructing and Organizing Memory

The constructivist and post-positivist epistemology of this research has from the outset been mindful of the way that each participant's narrative is an 'imaginative reconstruction of pieces of the past'¹² and that as such it is part of each person's social construction of reality.¹³ Not only is this memory embodied in the souvenir subject to revision and reconstruction, over time the object itself can also be used for telic purposes particularly in evangelistic proselytisation. For research participant Wood, telling his story of faith as an international evangelist

⁹ McDannell, p. 39.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Chester, p. 9. Plus Post interview field notes 16.9.2015

¹² McDannell, p. 39.

¹³ Riessman, p. 2. 'Individuals construct past events and actions in personal narratives to claim identities and construct lives. Not merely information storage devices, narratives structure perceptual experience, organise memory, segment and purpose-build the very events of life'.

on a world stage, involves him presenting to an audience his account of his initial encounter with *Journey Into Life*. The souvenir is not physically present but it is there as part of the evangelist's construction of the story of his journey into faith. At interview, it was apparent that in telling this part of the story about his use of *Journey Into Life* in 'opening the door to Jesus' and 'praying the prayer' he was drawing on pre-prepared and well-crafted evangelistic preaching material that had been selected for its impact on an audience as part of an evangelistic homiletic event.

The Souvenir in Homiletic Structures and Segments

Narrative analysis of the interview transcript with Wood revealed what Kohler-Riessman describes as stories that are 'constructed, creatively authored and rhetorical'.¹⁴ Segments of Wood's interview showed evidence of pre-constructed units of rhetorical homiletic material designed for use in the context of evangelistic talks and meetings being redeployed here in the context of the research interview. As Kohler-Riessman points out, the interpretation of a narrative must take into account the 'shifting roles of speaker and listener'.¹⁵ It is this shift in roles, between interviewee and professional evangelistic speaker, that was in evidence in the homiletic structures that Wood used to reference the object of faith and religious souvenir *Journey Into Life*. The souvenir brings back the memory but the way in which the past is reconstructed from this memory is significant, and to analyse the precise way that this remembering works requires a deconstruction of the way in which the particular memory is being recalled and retold. Examination of Wood's interview text showed units and segments where memories were reconstructed in a formulaic format, being well rehearsed, polished and reminiscent of a script from a play or stand-up comedy act performed as a routine. Although clothed in a conversational form, the interview felt from the interviewer's point of view like a performance, an impression endorsed by a constant implicit humour and a considerable amount of repetition

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 5.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 21.

and physical gestures including some drama. One aspect of the souvenir which dominated Wood's discourse, and was central to his narrative were the two key motifs of opening the door and praying the prayer. It was these two motifs that provided the focus of Wood's retelling of the story, showing how he recreated and held onto his own story, and yet he also reworked it and re-presented it for the purposes of public evangelism. Having brought back the memory through reconstructing his own story of how he 'picked up from *Journey Into Life*' and acted on the image of opening the door Wood not only held onto that story but developed it by expanding the original idea. Wood explained:

I like the analogy of the house. I think the house is a great analogy because the whole knocking, opening the door, just the whole logistics of it.¹⁶

His reconstruction developed the imagery in a rhetorical and theatrical manner, building a mental picture of Jesus coming in through the door and asking the question 'where does he go? do we open the cupboard and say get in there? Close the cupboard'. Wood used this to challenge his hearers in an evangelistic setting by saying 'he is in my life but he's not in all my life'¹⁷ and making the point that is made in *Journey Into Life* about the Lordship and control of Christ in the believer's life.¹⁸

Shaping the Evangelical Memory

This creative reconstruction of memory around the *Journey Into Life* as a souvenir shows how in the process of repeated retelling, particularly for rhetorical purposes, participants' stories not only become grooved and formatted but can be told and crafted in different ways to suit different situations. Wood's narrative reveals something of the mechanism by which *Journey Into Life* is internalised and then becomes reconstructed and developed for the purposes of telling others.¹⁹ *Journey Into Life* not only became a central

¹⁶ Wood, p. 10.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Warren, p. 10. Text says: 'Accept Jesus Christ into your life to be your Lord to control you'.

¹⁹ Morgan, p. 8.

part of the participants' stories but they themselves became part of the story they were trying to tell. In this way the souvenir *Journey Into Life*, although for some at different times in their lives was shelved or boxed, was always held onto and brought out from time to time in the context of the participants telling their story of faith.²⁰ *Journey Into Life* became part of their story as it was reconstructed and reformatted when the situation required. Whilst *Journey Into Life* was treasured as a precious object to be held onto physically by some, for many others it was stored and held onto in their memories, to be kept alive through the telling of their own story, and pointing them back to a highly significant place on their *journey into Life* as a souvenir of faith.

Journey Into Life as an Evangelical Relic

Holding onto the Relics of Evangelical Faith

It might seem alarming to compare a product of twentieth-century Protestant Evangelical Christianity with the rich historical and largely Catholic tradition surrounding the veneration of relics. Admittedly, there is a significant material difference between, say, the blood of St Thomas Becket sought out by medieval pilgrims to Canterbury or the preserved cranium of St Simon Stock venerated by today's pilgrims at Aylesford Priory and the twentieth-century booklet *Journey Into Life*. However, the way in which respondents talked about this artefact and its ongoing importance in their lives, gave a sense of this object having a relic-like quality in the lived religion of this group of evangelicals. In the broadest sense the relic is not just part of a deceased saint's body or apparel but any object surviving from an earlier time that is kept for its historical interest or as an object of reverence or devotion.²¹ The interviews showed the importance for the respondents of holding onto this object of faith, either physically or as a memory, and thus the need that these Protestant Evangelical Christians expressed for a material Christianity that could be reached back for and held

²⁰ Hendry, p. 19. The value of a gift in Japanese culture is 'found in the way precious objects are stored'.

²¹ Relic from the Latin *reliquiae* meaning to 'remain' and the verb '*relinquere*' meaning to 'abandon' or 'leave behind'.

onto. Faith as trust in an object, in addition to propositional belief and assent to a set of doctrinal statements, is a surprising phenomenon in the ordinary theology of practice within evangelicalism. Not only was the content of *Journey Into Life* important in holding onto evangelical faith, but examination of its material practices showed that it was the totality of the object itself and what it asserted in terms of identity that was being held onto and venerated as a relic of faith.²² This insight into the functioning of *Journey Into Life* as a religious relic first came to light in the interview with Wells to which we now turn.

Evangelical Protestant Relics

In the early stages of the interview with Wells, when he was asked if he could remember what the booklet looked like, he reached down and carefully withdrew from its 'reliquary' in the top right-hand drawer of his desk a well-worn and much revered original copy of *Journey Into Life*, the act of retrieval prompting him to recall how it had been gifted to him by his girlfriend on board a bus between Liverpool and Southport in 1980. There was a sense of expectancy as Wells shouted excitedly 'I have it here,' 'I have it! I've kept it' and as he examined the object Wells' tone of voice became serious and reverent indicating that for him this was a 'holy' artefact.²³ Wells' self-confessed deep attachment to this booklet, along with the hushed tone and the way that the object was carefully and respectfully handled, gave the impression that for him this was functioning as a form of relic.²⁴ The practice of 'venerating' relics is unusual but not new within Protestantism, as demonstrated in the eighteenth century when the evangelist George Whitefield's clerical collar, wristbands and thumb were employed by his evangelical followers in an attempt to connect them with Whitefield's personal power through physical contact with the deceased's personal artefacts and body parts.²⁵ McDannell observes that this veneration of relics in both Catholic and Protestant contexts is not only an act of individual

²² Morgan, p. 5.

²³ Wells, p. 1.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 9.

²⁵ McDannell, p. 43.

piety but also a contributor to the collective memory, with relics being 'meaningful for a whole community of people'.²⁶ The role of *Journey Into Life* in the collective memory of evangelical faith and corporate identity will be examined further in the next chapter but for this present analysis of the artefact as a relic, both the individual and collective impact are on view.

Portable Relics of Evangelical Faith

The importance of the original artefact as a relic in the ongoing faith journey of Wells was also echoed in May's interview. At interview, May expressed a sense of excitement about his original copy of *Journey Into Life*, particularly in his comment about 'the fact that it's still with me'. He said 'it's got stains on but it's still here, this is precious'.²⁷ Despite the stains, this relic that May described as 'precious' had been cared for and carried throughout his life pilgrimage. This care was expressed not only in the way that the object was carefully handled in the presence of the interviewer but also in the way that it had been preserved in the shoe box that had served for over thirty years as its humble reliquary. May explained his understanding of how the object continued to function in his life saying 'it's still here, this is a very important booklet because this is the booklet that I went through and prayed the prayer that led me to Christ'.²⁸ Physically holding onto and caring for this booklet was a way that May had found to connect back and re-engage with his original spiritual experience that had come to him as he had read the book and prayed the prayer. May had carried the message in a physical form from place to place taking great care to make sure that it was kept safe and held onto in a way that was both rooted and mobile, for as McDannell observes historians tend to emphasise the rootedness of the holy to the detriment of its mobility' forgetting that 'the holy can also be reduced and transferred from one place to another'.²⁹ This mobility of object was clearly expressed by May who said:

²⁶ Ibid. p. 42.

²⁷ May, p. 8.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ McDannell, p. 136.

So, that has gone with me from home when I was living with my parents, to single life and to married life, to being father and grandfather, it's still here!³⁰

The history of relics demonstrates this idea of the development of the mobility of the object as seen in the sixth-century pilgrims who brought back earth, water and oil from holy sites such as the grave of St John the Evangelist which were ascribed healing powers even when removed far away from the shrine.³¹ In a manner similar to that of the pilgrim whose memory was refreshed by possession of an object from the shrine to 'duplicate the sanctity of the original site at a distance',³² so May's possession of this precious object stirred memory and invited a revisiting of the site of the original experience. Holding onto the object was more than just a reminder of faith for May who in his practice of keeping, carrying and caring for *Journey Into Life* was using it to re-connect with the power of the original experience in a manner akin to that of the pilgrims holding onto the precious relic that they had bought at the shrine, where they had knelt before the saint whose blessing and help they had been seeking.

Reliquiae or Relinquere

The tension between holding on and leaving behind is inherent in the etymology of the word relic. Etymologically, the word 'relic' is a combination of the Latin *reliquiae* to remain and the verb *relinquere* to abandon or to leave behind. In the course of the interviews it became apparent that respondents were wrestling with the tension of wanting to hold onto the Christian faith as represented in *Journey Into Life*, whilst often reluctantly finding in practice that they were in varying degrees leaving behind this evangelical representation of the gospel. This tension and sense of torn loyalties manifested itself at differing intensities in the interviews and for two of the respondents the interview itself was a catalyst for self-reflection about their previously unvoiced thoughts and feelings concerning

³⁰ May, p. 9.

³¹ McDannell, p. 136. Archeologist found *ampullae* called *eulogiae* (blessings) that contained earth, oil or water and inscribed on the *ampullae* were representations of the place, building or holy person visited.

³² Ibid.

their inner conflict about holding onto the representation of the gospel in *Journey Into Life*. Chester said 'that to me is the strong foundation' but later in the interview she vocalised a question that seemed new to her when she blurted out, 'but it's still the gospel isn't it?'³³ This was followed by a pause and a reflexive moment indicating that for her this was an important new question, especially at this stage in her own story of preparation for ordained ministry in the Church of England. Similarly, in the middle of Hurst's interview, he expressing his reverence for *Journey Into Life* as writing with 'an anointing on it' and said:

It probably shaped how I thought about God for years to come, even now, it provided a foundation of understanding that was really important... if ever I had periods of uncertainty or doubt I'd have gone back to *Journey Into Life* to say hang on a minute, what is it Christians believe about this?³⁴

However, after this reflection his voice became very serious in tone and in a hesitating manner he said 'um I think the theology behind it, I think there could be a problem'.³⁵ Kerr's interview also demonstrated the way that for her holding onto *Journey Into Life* represented holding onto an assumed and unstated cluster of evangelical ideas about the gospel. Kerr reflected this in two statements, the first of which said 'I mean obviously, nothing changes you know' expressing the idea that the message remains the same. This was further reinforced by the statement 'I mean nothing's changed, has it? I mean it's still...'. Kerr left her sentence hanging on the words 'it's still...' but unlike Chester and Hurst she did not take that further and start to question her assumption that 'it's still' the gospel.³⁶ Chester, Hurst and Kerr were *reliquiae* in the sense that they were holding onto and remaining within the *Journey Into Life* theological paradigm even though when questioned Chester and Hurst realised they needed to give their 'taken for granted' and largely unquestioned assumptions about this gospel a great deal more concentrated thought. The interview data revealed three main

³³ Chester, p. 11&19.

³⁴ Hurst, p. 17&9.

³⁵ Ibid. p. 16.

³⁶ Kerr, p. 8. At least not in the interview.

areas of tension as these *Journey Into Life* alumni were seeking to hold onto this gospel paradigm. Firstly, the challenge of postmodern thinking both inside and outside the church. Secondly, institutional ecclesiastical pressures to leave this gospel message behind and, thirdly, tensions experienced in the arena of academic theological study and education.

Postmodern Tensions

Dench experienced this tension as a missionary priest carrying this *Journey Into Life* message into a 'broad church' Anglican parish. Dench was personally influenced by postmodern missiological thinking in the work of McLaren particularly his perspective on salvation as being 'a journey of faith rather than a decision point'.³⁷ Dench felt that 'now in a postmodern world' this was 'probably a more acceptable position than the clear one' that had been presented to him through *Journey Into Life*.³⁸ Dench felt that McLaren's critique of this linear overarching salvation narrative had merit, and the people he had been working with would not want to accept *Journey Into Life* at face value because they were saying 'let's make up our own mind and decide for ourselves what we need [to do] to be saved'. As Dench said 'they want to argue the case' and a good number of them 'would not accept that narrative as being a true one that they could subscribe to'. Dench acknowledged that this postmodern hermeneutic of suspicion was in sharp contrast to his own 'modern' upbringing, where there were 'lots and lots of young people looking for certainty' and liking the 'fact [that] there is a certain answer'.³⁹

Ecclesiastical Tensions

Ecclesiastical peer group pressure to leave behind the *Journey Into Life* gospel message as a relic of a former age was experienced by the two interviewees who held senior positions in the structures of the Church of England. The author Warren recalled the resistance and opposition that he experienced when as an

³⁷ Brian D. McLaren, *A New Kind of Christianity* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2004).

³⁸ Dench, p. 14.

³⁹ Ibid.

Archdeacon he first introduced the idea of using *Journey Into Life* and its associated practices as part of a programme of evangelism in the Diocese of Rochester in the early 1990s. On a sabbatical visit to the Anglican Church in Uganda, Warren had seen how lay evangelists were trained and deployed, so he proposed and secured the agreement of Bishop Michael Turnbull to train and authorise evangelists as accredited workers in the Rochester Diocese along the lines of the existing lay preacher's [reader's] program. Warren recalled that despite the backing of the Diocesan Bishop his proposal was 'bitterly opposed by members of the Bishops' Council' and he 'had a real battle to get it through'. He said that the Bishop's Council were 'really suspicious of anything evangelistic' and he had to 'diffuse the thing' by saying that he was not making 'Billy Grahams' but teams of committed Christians who would be trained to help in parish mission.⁴⁰ The evangelists' training, licensing and deployment eventually went ahead and as Warren said 'we used *Journey Into Life* very widely in the missions we did'.⁴¹ Clements, also an Archdeacon in the Church of England, revealed an ongoing wrestling with the tension between his original *Journey Into Life* evangelicalism and his contemporary *habitus* in the senior echelons of the Anglican Church. At interview, he said that:

This real earthy gospel hall dimension to faith still remains an important part of me even though you know, I mean I am wearing chasubles and you know, ponsing around the Cathedral.

Importantly Clements said 'there is a sense in which that remains for me, that is always the heart and I'll always come back to that'.⁴² Clements' comments were followed at interview by what seemed at the time to be a major digression from this issue and the subject of *Journey Into Life*. However, having reconsidered this material, far from being a digression, it threw light on the way that Clements had been dealing with the tension of trying to hold on to the gospel of the evangelical 'Argo' whilst operating in a broader Anglican environment. The word that most clearly describes the mechanism that Clements was using here is

⁴⁰ Warren, p. 33.

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 34.

⁴² Clements, pp. 8-9.

‘nostalgia’. His seemingly irrelevant digression about the importance of music was highly significant because it mirrored the way that *Journey Into Life* was also working for him in the present. Clements said it ‘was an interesting thing that I discovered the group [U2] at the same time’ as his spiritual life was developing through his discovery of *Journey Into Life*.⁴³ The music of his youth in the 1970s and 1980s acted nostalgically in returning his thoughts to a particular former time in his life. This demonstrated the way that Clements even in his broad church ecclesiastical environment was ‘holding on’ to the *Journey Into Life* gospel through a mechanism of nostalgia in a similar way to his holding on to the music of Bono and U2.

Academic Tensions

King’s interview demonstrated clear tensions and divided loyalties as he left the security of the evangelical ‘Argo’ to engage in what was perceived as a more theologically risky environment of theological research, writing and teaching in the academy as a senior professor of theological education. The interview began with King looking at the original copy of *Journey Into Life* on the coffee table and exclaiming in an excited tone ‘it was all those years ago since and I recognise it immediately!’.⁴⁴ There was a sense of release of tension in this by now familiar nostalgic reaction, but in this case it belied a significant amount of premeditation and perhaps even anxiety that had been taking place in King’s preparation for the research interview, as evidenced in his comment that he had ‘been wracking his brains knowing we were going to have this conversation’.⁴⁵ *Journey Into Life* as an object of faith clearly stirred up nostalgic memories and, whilst not possessing the physical object, King articulated the way that he was holding on to it during the interview in what he described as the post-Christian and secular environment of the academy. He said that ‘we live in a profoundly post-Christian world in that there is a dominant worldview that drives just about everything across the globe’. He saw himself as being in ‘a situation akin to the situation of

⁴³ Ibid. p. 9.

⁴⁴ King, p. 1.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 2.

the first Christians' who found themselves responding to their plural world by holding and telling a better story indeed 'the best story'.⁴⁶ *Journey into Life* was thus 'seminal' for King providing him not only with his 'first theological writing', but also with something that he 'never departed from' and 'the core' in the Christian story that he first saw 'doctrinally articulated' in *Journey Into Life*.⁴⁷

Journey Into Life as an Evangelical Icon

Iconic Practices of Belief

Having been embraced by the evangelical 'Argo' in the growing evangelical churches in the United Kingdom in the 1960s, *Journey Into Life* began to assume an iconic status functioning as both a relic and souvenir of faith. This occurred not only on an individual level but also corporately within the evangelical 'Argo' where it became part of evangelical iconography ubiquitously present on the bookstalls and trendy new coffee tables at the back of evangelical churches. The road sign tract became an immediately identifiable visual and material marker of evangelical identity within the expanding evangelical ecclesial movement from the 1960s onwards. The intentional placement of *Journey Into Life* on the church table or bookstall provided a means of identifying that church with the growing evangelical movement. Like the regimental colours of a nineteenth-century army on the battlefield *Journey Into Life* provided a visual rallying point as churches, particularly Anglican ones, embraced the theology and practices of the emerging evangelical movement. Despite the inherent iconoclasm towards the image in evangelical history and tradition, there was within the interview data evidence of this artefact *Journey Into Life* being a recognised window through which individuals were looking in search of the transcendent reality behind it. Analysis of the interview data showed *Journey Into Life* being incorporated into this 'act of visual piety' as part of an 'iconic practice of belief' within the evangelical 'Argo' at both a corporate and individual level.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ibid. pp. 13-14.

⁴⁷ Ibid. pp. 7-18.

⁴⁸ Morgan, p. 4.

Iconography Aboard the Evangelical Argo

The iconic place of *Journey Into Life* in the corporate memory of the evangelical 'Argo' was expressed in the enthusiastic and warm response of evangelicals as they talked about this artefact. The thematic analysis showed just how frequently people would respond with nostalgic sentiment, for instance 'oh yes the road signs tract I remember that' or 'I used to use that in my early days as a minister'. Just the words road signs tract brought instantaneous recognition often accompanied by nostalgic memories, harking back to some sort of 'mythical golden age' in the evangelical corporate memory. Even years after its heyday the road signs tract *Journey Into Life* continued to function as an icon and an important part of evangelical iconographic history that has continued as an enduring reminder of evangelical identification. *Journey Into Life* had clearly performed an important role in evangelical iconography, functioning as a 'rallying flag' that drew together disparate evangelical groups under its road sign banner. The possession and display of this artefact performed an iconographic function identifying the church group or individual as 'evangelical'. This role of *Journey Into Life* as an icon in evangelical identification was further evidenced in the interview data. Hurst recognised this iconographic role of *Journey Into Life* cross-denominationally and he remembered seeing it in 'churches all over Northern Ireland' some of whom 'had piles of them at the back of the church'.⁴⁹ Ford remembered it just 'being around', a familiar experience also shared by May who also remembered 'seeing them around in different churches' and commented that 'it always felt quite reassuring to see it around'.⁵⁰ Chester remembered seeing a lot of them around in Christian bookshops however, she felt that since the decline in such shops *Journey Into life* had become less readily available and therefore less visible. Dench expressed a more nostalgic 'fondness for it' and clearly remembered that:

⁴⁹ Hurst, p. 16.

⁵⁰ Ford, p. 14; May, p. 13.

There was a little display area with lots of leaflets on and then next to it was the bookstall which was opened-up on the Sunday morning and these were always on display.⁵¹

Kerr said that she 'would recognise it instantly' because for her the road signs were such an important 'symbol'.⁵² In a manner, similar to contemporary GUI's [graphical user interface icons] on tablets and smart phones, *Journey Into Life* was an instantly identifiable symbol of evangelical identity in the 1960s through to the end of the 1980s. *Journey Into Life* was an icon and symbol of evangelical identity and together with other signifying artefacts of evangelical material culture such as the *Good News For Modern Man*, *Youth Praise* and *Jesus stickers*, it provided a visible means of identifying as evangelical.⁵³

Iconic Practices of Belief Aboard the Evangelical Argo

Journey Into Life functioned as an icon of evangelical identity but, as we have seen, the 'acute spiritual experiences' reported in the research interview data pointed to a deeper transcendent and iconic role in the participants' engagement with the tract. Iconoclastic deposits from the Reformed Protestant theology and puritan roots of evangelicalism have historically been hostile to the use of images, and yet 'acute spiritual experiences' were reported in these visual encounters with *Journey Into Life*. The evangelical Protestant research participants' accounts of such mystical experiences show remarkable similarities with a more Eastern Orthodox openness to 'the possibility of the expression through a material medium of the divine realities'.⁵⁴ Icons 'express things in themselves invisible, and render them present, visible and active'.⁵⁵ As demonstrated in the 'acute spiritual experiences' reported by research participants, *Journey Into Life* performed this mediation of the divine realities and rendered them present in a manner similar to that of a person in the

⁵¹ Dench, p. 11.

⁵² Kerr, p. 7.

⁵³ *Good News for Modern Man: The New Testament in Today's English Version* (Fontana Religious, 1966). Michael A. Baughan, 'Youth Praise: A New Collection of Christian Hymns, Songs, Choruses and Spirituals', (London: Falcon Books, 1966).

⁵⁴ Lossky, p. 10.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 189.

Orthodox tradition engaging with an icon. Lossky explains the way such an icon not only directs the imagination in prayer, but also serves as 'a material centre in which there reposes an energy, a divine force, which unites itself to human art'.⁵⁶ The 'acute spiritual experiences' of the research participants reflect this encounter with the 'divine force' and 'energy' within the 'material centre' of *Journey Into Life*. Through such gateway encounters, participants journeyed into life with the divine through the material and visual artefact serving as an icon of evangelical faith.

Iconoclasm Aboard the Argo

Whilst such mystical experiences were reported upon initial use of *Journey Into Life*, there was no evidence of the ongoing use of the tract as an icon in the spiritual practice of respondents. As previously noted the mid-twentieth-century evangelical 'Argo' avoided mysticism, encouraging a robust rationalistic spirituality built upon the four pillars of bible, prayer, church and witness.⁵⁷ Despite these reported powerful and supernatural initial experiences the way in was not the way ahead with spiritual directions for these new believers mapped out not as visual piety, but in terms of 'active service' especially Bible reading, prayer and going to church.⁵⁸ This down to earth no-nonsense noetic spirituality of the evangelical camp fitted well into the ethos of 'muscular' public school Christianity of the evangelical 'Argo'. However, as the interview data showed, this 'no nonsense' conservative evangelical approach to spirituality did not satisfy the mystical void, and this noetic vacuum was later filled, by the importation of practices of visual piety from different Christian traditions.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Warren, pp. 15-16.

⁵⁸ Norman Warren later wrote and published two sequels to *Journey Into Life* that expanded upon these two themes of 'directions' and 'the way ahead.' Norman Warren, *Directions: Fourteen Bible Study Outlines on Basic Christianity*, (London: Falcon Booklets, 1969); Norman Warren, *The Way Ahead: A Practical Guide to Christian Living*, (London: Falcon Booklets, 1966).

The Noetic Vacuum

The recognition by King of the 'seminal role' of *Journey Into Life* in his initial conversion experience was tempered by a narrative that located his experience within the context of a life-long spiritual quest employing elements of visual piety from both Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions. He said that 'by the time I was in upper secondary school I had icons on my wall and when I got to university a crucifix went up'.⁵⁹ Clement's narrative also showed an early awareness of the emerging post-modern 'feel of the world' particularly through his use of contemporary cultural artefacts in the development of his spiritual life.⁶⁰ Clements related how his close identification with the rock band U2, and its enigmatic leader Bono, had been and still was a culturally important part of his Christian formation having discovered them in the same month that he 'discovered Christ'.⁶¹ Clements had always felt that although the band had their own spiritual journey 'they are kind of going through the same experience I'm going through'. Their importance in Clement's life was reinforced in his Archdeaconry where the usual pictures of churches, images of Christ and icons on the wall were replaced by a framed and signed picture of U2. Wood's interview was also an example of the way that the conservative noetic vacuum was quickly filled by a charismatic Christian experience, characterised by speaking in tongues and a conscious awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Wood felt that from his own experience 'there is a limit to how much we can fully understand and comprehend without his spirit in us', and therefore he was a keen advocate of enabling others to 'step over the line' to receive the Spirit's power.⁶² As an evangelist with this charismatic experience, Wood was fully aware of the noetic vacuum created by the inherited rationalistic conservative and noetic spirituality of the evangelical 'Argo'.

⁵⁹ King, p. 3.

⁶⁰ Clements, p. 14.

⁶¹ Ibid. p. 9.

⁶² Wood, p. 24.

Visual Strategies and the Hegemony of The Word

This noetic spirituality of the evangelical 'Argo' retained its reformation heritage in privileging the 'ear over the eye, hearing over seeing, and the word over the image and the book over the statue'.⁶³ As Warren discovered when he approached the 'Scripture Union' in his initial attempts to get *Journey Into Life* published, visual representations of Christianity were only considered appropriate for children and young people in the form of visual material artefacts developed for Sunday schools and young people's work. McDannell concurs, saying:

The truth of Christianity was to be conveyed through the word of God, contained in the words of scripture, preached from the pulpit, or read from the Bible.⁶⁴

This Reformed tradition ran deep in the evangelical 'Argo' producing a spirituality that relied on words rather than images to connect with God. As McDannell observes, in this tradition:

Those who use non-literary means of expressing ideas about the supernatural and its relationship to the everyday world have not been considered fully 'adult' Christians.⁶⁵

Material objects and images were acceptable for children, but adults were expected to engage with God through his word. Significantly the publication and mass distribution of *Journey Into Life* in 1963 marked a turning point in this hegemony of the word employing a visual strategy to communicate 'the gospel' with an adult audience.

Evangelical Icon

Journey Into Life, that is 'the green one', as it was labelled by participants in the research interviews, was one of the earliest 'iconic' visual material artefacts of the mid-twentieth-century evangelical 'Argo'. *Journey Into Life* broke the

⁶³ McDannell, p. 13.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 8.

evangelical moratorium on the use of images for adult Christian literature in the leading evangelical publishing house of that time, as well as becoming a flagship religious product in the developing consumer market in religious artefacts that were to be used in asserting evangelical identity. *Journey Into Life* was, and still is, a precious object for the research participants endorsing McDannell's contention that 'people need objects' because the 'sensual elements of Christianity are not merely decorations that mark serious belief' rather it is through 'the visible world that the invisible world becomes known and felt'.⁶⁶ Despite the inherited iconoclasm within evangelicalism and its suspicion of the image this present chapter has revealed the role of *Journey Into Life* as a venerated icon of evangelical identity, and a window through which these Christians perceived a spiritual reality behind the artefact, a reality that was tenaciously held onto, with the result that *Journey Into Life* become a treasured icon and artefact of evangelical identity and faith.

⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 272.

Chapter Eight - Handing on The Gift of *Journey Into Life*

Handing it on

This chapter explores the ways in which the identity of evangelicals has been shaped and constructed around the gifting of *Journey Into Life* as demonstrated in the broad spectrum of commitment to this practice in the interview data. This chapter firstly examines these different levels of the obligation to give looking at the spectrum of narratives, from those where the message of the tract was immediately and spontaneously handed on, to those where the gifting was seemingly dormant. Secondly, this chapter identifies the inherent problematisation of the process of handing on the message that was uncovered in the interview narratives. It looks at the erosion of the idea of handing on this message of *Journey Into Life* amongst these evangelicals, with particular attention being given to those who felt that they should be handing it on in the prescribed way but in practice were not. Thirdly, this chapter examines the alternative embodied practices of handing on the gift that were developed in the lived religion of the research participants, showing the diversity of ways they found to pass on their *Journey Into Life*.

Levels of Obligation

The Obligation to Give

The research interviews revealed that implicit within the gift exchange processes surrounding the use of *Journey Into Life* was the obligation to give. The majority, but not all, of the participants in this research who received the booklet and who embraced its message also adopted the idea that this was something that they either wanted to or had to pass on to others.¹ For some participants, reception of *Journey Into Life* resulted in a strong desire to tell others about their

¹ Mauss drew attention to ‘the obligation attached to the gift itself’ and the sense that ‘it would not be right’ to keep the gift for oneself. Indeed Mauss observed that in Maori culture it was ‘dangerous’ to hold onto the gift as it was not inert and its spirit was perceived as pursuing ‘him who holds it’. Mauss, pp. 9-10.

experience in a quite spontaneous and unselfconscious way, whereas for others the act of handing it on was the result of a deliberate decision and the result of inculturation into the evangelical 'Argo'. The pragmatic assumption that as *Journey Into Life* had worked for them it could also work for others, encouraged the participants to hand on the tract in the belief that others would respond to its message in a similar manner. In this way *Journey Into Life* was understood to be a valuable gift that was for sharing often being carried in pockets and bags ready to be handed on. The research showed how the idea of sharing *Journey Into Life* through personal one-to-one evangelism was an important part in the inculturation of participants into the evangelical 'Argo' and a central signifying practice in evangelical identity.² However, within the interview data there was evidence of problems associated with the obligation to give. Some participants grappled with a sense of guilt and failure and feeling that they had fallen short of what they perceived as the normative expectation of the evangelical 'Argo' that they should hand it on in the prescribed way. Interview narratives revealed a sense that participants ought to be doing this even though in practice some were not. These different levels of commitment from within the data will be examined in what follows, where a broad spectrum of approaches will be observed, ranging from spontaneous sharing to more diffuse practices for handing on the message of *Journey Into Life*.

Spontaneous Dynamic Sharing of *Journey into Life*

Clements noted the instruction in *Journey Into Life* to 'tell one other person within Twenty-Four hours what you have done',³ and so he immediately told his best friend. His confession of faith was repeated and reinforced three days later when he told a couple of other friends what he had done. Clements particularly recalled that during the process of sharing 'there was an extraordinary powerful sense of a deep sense of conviction of the presence of God in that room as I

² Du Gay, pp. 17-18. In cultural studies a signifying practice refers to practices that are 'organized, guided and framed by meaning. They are meaningful for the participants involved'.

³ Warren, p. 16.

actually said this'.⁴ The following Sunday he took his friends to church and one of them made a commitment of faith at that meeting. Clements commented that his friend's faith commitment was one that had stuck ever since as he knew that she had continued to worship at that same church up to this present time. Reflecting on this Clements said 'I did what I'd describe now as utterly self-conscious pre-theoretical evangelism [as] I didn't actually have any sense that you have to do this kind of thing'.⁵ He had not been told that he had to do evangelism, it just happened spontaneously. Furthermore, Clements reflected that this handing it on was not under any form of external obligation to give and neither did he have any sense that you should do this kind of thing or that you 'should mention it to people'.⁶ Clements 'just did it' spontaneously, as he said 'just like sharing news',⁷ with the consequence that it triggered off something quite remarkable in others. From having read *Journey Into Life* and praying in private in a very low-key way he felt that he 'suddenly kind of exploded',⁸ resulting in a temporary move beyond and outside his naturally private personality, enabling him to share his newly found faith with somebody in such a way that they too felt deeply convicted and came to faith themselves that following Sunday. Clements' pre-theoretical evangelism was free from any sense of an externally imposed obligation in relation to giving away what he had received as, for him, there was an explosive power or 'dynamite'⁹ that impelled him to hand on the gift that he himself had just received.¹⁰

Wood reported a similar spontaneous act of evangelism¹¹ in his narrative recalling that the day after praying the prayer in *Journey Into Life*, not only did he wake up knowing that he was a Christian but later on that day he had a

⁴ Clements, p. 3.

⁵ Ibid. p. 4.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid. p. 6.

¹⁰ The idea of evangelism as an 'explosion' akin to population explosion was promoted in the 1970s and 80s by Dr. James Kennedy through his 'evangelism explosion' programme that was widely adopted in evangelical churches in the UK. Kennedy, p. 19.

¹¹ Missiologist Roland Allen developed his influential missiological theory around this principle of spontaneous evangelism. Roland Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 1927, 2006), pp. 3-9.

conversation with his best friend who also responded to the message of *Journey Into Life*'. Wood said to his friend that he had become a Christian the night before and he asked his friend if he was a Christian and following a negative response Wood got *Journey Into Life* out of his pocket and went through the booklet with his friend. Wood remembered insisting that his friend should say the prayer with the result that his friend not only professed faith, but also immediately became treasurer of their spontaneously formed University Christian Union. Wood said that he 'led another guy to the Lord soon after that and [would] just be introducing people to Jesus and giving out John Stott booklets and *Journeys Into Life* just like anything'.¹² Spontaneous evangelism through *Journey Into Life* did not always receive this kind of enthusiastic reception as demonstrated in Chester and Herne's attempts to hand it on to their parents. Chester came from a home that was not engaged in the church, and the Christian faith was not part of her upbringing, so found herself without support for her new-found faith. She expressed her disappointment as she recalled that having made her own decision following reading *Journey Into Life* in her bedroom she immediately went downstairs and gave the booklet to her mum and dad with the full expectation that the same thing would happen to them, but it did not. Chester commented that she did not know if they ever read it and at the time they expressed concern that their daughter might have 'joined a cult'.¹³ Herne's mother did not really take her daughter's profession of faith seriously and laughed it off saying 'never mind darling you'll grow out of it'.¹⁴ On reflection, Herne commented that her mother's response to *Journey Into Life* was that she was 'totally flummoxed by it'.¹⁵ These initial setbacks in handing on *Journey Into Life* did not deter either Chester or Herne in their desire to pass on the booklet and indeed Chester said that as a teenager she 'used it quite a lot'.¹⁶

¹² Wood, p. 20.

¹³ Chester, p. 7.

¹⁴ Herne, p. 3.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Chester, p. 12.

Consistently Sharing the *Journey Into Life*

Although less spontaneous and a good deal less dramatic than Wood's and Clements' initial response, the participant narratives revealed that the practice of handing on the gift of *Journey Into Life* had for others assumed a less dramatic but more steady and ongoing approach. Wells exemplified this steady and settled approach to evangelism, describing his practice over thirty years particularly in the context of going to new places as an itinerant preacher, he said he would usually have 'two or three in my pocket'.¹⁷ Wells' steady commitment to handing it on was physically demonstrated by a large number of copies of *Journey Into Life* in his office and described how he would be milling around after evangelistic services so that he could give them away. He said that 'when I'm telling my story it's the most natural thing in the world to have the book knocking about and I use it in many ways'.¹⁸ Wells' favoured approach was to say to visitors to his church 'take a copy, it helped me, you've heard my story, why don't you take it?'¹⁹ May's narrative also showed an ongoing settled and steady commitment to handing on *Journey Into Life* particularly in his work leading Christian youth camps for teenagers in the summer holidays. He said at the time of interview that he had only recently bought a new supply of *Journey Into Life* booklets to give away personally, as well as providing them for his team leaders to give to young people following on from conversations at the camp.²⁰

Herne expressed her desire to hand on the message of *Journey Into Life* using the idea of a booklet, but was now looking for one that was more contemporary and re-worked using familiar contemporary symbols such as computer icons or smartphone graphics, instead of road signs which she thought were now dated.²¹ Similarly, Wood had maintained a life-long conviction that this 'still works'²² and that 'people still need something in their hands'²³ but for him this ongoing commitment to sharing and handing on the message of *Journey*

¹⁷ Wells, p. 4.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 8.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 10.

²⁰ May, p. 10.

²¹ Herne, p. 13.

²² Wood, p. 30.

²³ Ibid. p. 32.

Into Life found expression in his desire to develop and produce an accessible contemporary booklet that could be given to ‘anyone, anytime, anywhere’.²⁴ For Wood, handing on a booklet like *Journey Into Life*, was what evangelicals do and clearly for him this was part of being and acting evangelical. Wood expressed the conviction that as evangelicals ‘we believe in booklets’ and he took it for granted that if you are evangelical you would want to do this, endorsing his view that this still works today. He expressed this view when he said ‘I am totally sold out to it’.²⁵

Diverse Practices of Sharing the *Journey Into Life*

Further along the spectrum of responses to the obligation to give were those who developed more diffuse ways of sharing and handing on the message, whilst still wanting to hold onto the evangelical sense of identity which was formed, in part, through the gifting process. This approach was expressed as a move away from the simplicity and clarity of the message of *Journey Into Life* towards more oblique, diverse and complex ways of expressing faith. There was a tension here between, on the one hand an ongoing commitment to handing on the message, and yet on the other hand a desire to share that message in a different way, with the result that the participants in this category had sought to resolve this tension by developing new and different ways of expressing and exchanging their message. At the far end of this spectrum of diversity in the obligation to give was Brown who said that she did not need the tract because she regarded herself as the tract. She saw her embodied self as a tract with her broken body and her life acting as a signpost and the question mark raising the question ‘what is God up to?’²⁶ These increasingly diverse and creative new evangelistic paradigms that the research participants like Brown had been developing are the subject of the last section of this chapter. However, before exploring these new paradigms it is important to look at those participants within the sample who were inhabiting a

²⁴ Ibid. p. 30.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 25.

²⁶ Brown, p. 15.

liminal space with regard to their use of the *Journey Into Life* paradigm in handing on their message.

Degrees of Liminality

Evangelical Liminality

With the increasing recognition in post modernity that identity is performatively and socially constituted, it is not entirely surprising that the *Journey Into Life* research interviews showed a move away from clear binary expressions of evangelical identity to more fluid and less stable positions.²⁷ The familiar and comfortable mid-twentieth century evangelicalism that gave rise to *Journey Into Life* was seen in some of the interview data to be shifting into an in-between place that was strange, unfamiliar and uncomfortable. The interviews demonstrated differing degrees of liminality, a state that Rohr describes as being 'when you have left the tried and true but have not been able to replace it'.²⁸ Participant narratives showed them passing through an uncomfortable transition, accompanied by a loss of clear evangelical identity between their old comfort zone and any possible new answer. However, in this liminal state something new was emerging and that new thing is the subject of the third section of this chapter, but first we need to examine and understand more about this liminal evangelical experience with the erosion and decay of the evangelical idea that was taking place in some of these participants.

A Liminal Space

The concept of liminality introduced above is influenced by Rohr's work in which he notes that the idea of liminality come from the Latin word *Lumina* meaning the space betwixt or between, and goes on to describe a liminal place as somewhere 'human beings hate to be but where the Biblical God is always leading them'.²⁹ This space is created when you have left the tried and true but

²⁷ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1990), p. 25. A theme developed in her influential work on gender identities.

²⁸ Richard Rohr, 'Grieving as Sacred Space', in *John Mark Ministries: Thinking Maturely About The Christian Faith*, (2003).

²⁹ Ibid.

have not yet been able to replace it and it is this place or space that has proved to be most testing for the *Journey Into Life* alumni.³⁰ It is this liminal space that we now enter through the voices of the research participants. Hurst experienced seeds of doubt as he handed out *Journey Into Life* on a parochial visit during his final year as a Church of England Curate serving in North Kent. Having gifted the booklet and left it with his prospect, he returned the following week expecting to have a positive and polite conversation but the recipient completely rejected this presentation of the Christian message. Hurst said that he was ‘stunned’ and ‘quite thrown by that’ and found himself feeling quite ‘defensive for Warren and the book’.³¹ At the time, Hurst viewed this rejection of *Journey Into Life* as a rejection of the Christian faith but when asked at interview if he thought it was possible to reject the booklet and not the Christian faith, his view had shifted.³² Indeed, Hurst found this interview question to be quite awkward and, following a long pause and the interjection that it was an ‘interesting question’, he said that he now thought that you could reject the booklet but not the Christian faith. His explanation for this shift in his thinking was that he now saw that you could reject the presentation of the gospel which is given in this book on the basis that ‘the way the Christian life is being presented here’ is not always ‘the best place to start’ and that there were situations where it would be ‘better to start with something else’. This led onto the comment that he felt that there could also ‘be a problem with the theology behind it’ and this tied in with questions about this evangelistic practice that he had been mulling over following his recent appointment as the leader of a large urban evangelical church.³³ The interview process was itself a catalyst for Hurst to engage anew in theological reflection on the use of this and similar ‘tools’ for evangelism in the local church. His comment that ‘you can imagine somebody saying it’s not necessarily that helpful’ revealed

³⁰ Public dissent from the conservative evangelical gospel [as represented in *Journey Into Life*] can lead to public censure and exclusion as evidenced after the shunning of the United Kingdom’s foremost evangelical leader Steve Chalke following the publication of Steve Chalke and Alan Mann, *The Lost Message of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003). See also footnotes in Chapter 9 under the heading Propitiation, Expiation and Exclusion.

³¹ Hurst, p. 12.

³² Ibid. p. 13.

³³ Ibid. pp. 13-14.

an uncertainty and a clear shift that was taking place in Hurst's thinking about this way of handing on the Christian message.³⁴ Dench expressed his concern and doubts about the idea of handing on *Journey Into Life* when he said 'I think it could work today but I am not sure that it would work today'.³⁵ As Hurst had experienced, Dench thought that there are people today who would find it offensive, and he felt that people receiving *Journey Into Life* would be resistant to its inherent authoritative approach. He thought that some of the people he works with would prefer to make up their own minds and 'decide for themselves what they need to do to be saved'.³⁶ In spite of these reservations he was himself still holding onto the idea that 'it could work' amongst those who are 'looking for certainty, answers and black and white thinking'.³⁷ Hurst and Dench's interviews made visible the liminal space occupied by evangelicals who whilst holding onto the *Journey Into Life* gospel imperative had become less confident in its universal efficacy and appeal.

The Erosion of The Evangelical Idea

The interviews with Clements, King and Brown show a more advanced level of erosion in the evangelical approach to handing on the *Journey Into Life* message. For Clements, this process of erosion started when as a student he spent a summer in south east London with the Cambridge University Mission. He was sent out door knocking to engage in a form of 'no messing around' evangelism that he referred to as 'completely in your face eyeballing'.³⁸ He said that sharing *Journey Into Life* door-to-door in this frontline way had been formative in his call to preach and teach, but these experiences had also planted within him a desire 'to engage with culture as well' and to wrestle with the 'implication of the gospel in a cultural context'.³⁹ From his contemporary perspective, Clements felt that *Journey Into Life* was 'rooted in those values of rationality and the linear

³⁴ Ibid. p. 14.

³⁵ Dench, p. 13.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 14.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Clements, p. 12.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 13.

approach which just feels very different to the postmodern world where everything's scatty'.⁴⁰ His 'hunch' was that today's eighteen year olds would not respond in the way that he had responded because they are inhabiting a very different culture where 'you take pieces from here and there and it's about mood and image and what works for you'.⁴¹ At interview, King said he could not remember ever having copies of *Journey Into Life* to give to other people and right from the beginning of his Christian life he has regularly shared his faith but not in this way. He always felt that the *Journey Into Life* 'process' and 'this way of doing it' was 'artificial'.⁴² King spent a year working for a church on the Broadwater Farm Estate not long after the Tottenham riots in October 1985 and in response to these events the vicar thought it was time to engage in mission, so he sent King out door knocking on the estate. King recalled that he 'wanted us to go and knock at doors and I didn't, I went and hid'.⁴³ This was because he felt that there was an 'artificiality' about the process and his preferred way of sharing his faith was through 'conversations' that came about 'naturally'.⁴⁴ Even at a young age this approach of handing on the message clashed with King's values which regarded the 'relational thing' and 'responsibility for the life of people around' him as important and therefore cold calling with tracts was not something he could do.⁴⁵ This ongoing desire to share the Christian message, but not through personal or impersonal gifting of *Journey Into Life*, was also clearly visible in Brown's narrative. Her experience of 'having made that journey by another route'⁴⁶ resulted in her developing alternative approaches to evangelism and it is to this and other different new ways of handing on the message that we now turn.

Diversity of Expression

Whilst the idea of handing on *Journey Into Life* in its pure form through giving

⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 14.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² King, p. 10.

⁴³ Ibid. p. 11.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 16.

⁴⁶ Brown, p. 13.

someone the booklet had been eroded over time, the data showed that loyalty to the principle of handing on the message of the gospel tract continued to hold an enduring place within each of the participants' life narratives. King expressed the corporate response of the participants when he said, that *Journey Into Life* was something that was 'never departed from'. However, what this and the other narratives revealed, were the diverse and oblique ways as well as specific professional roles that respondents had inhabited as they sought to find their own way to express and hand on the message of the tract. The interviews uncovered a new type of 'evangelism explosion' that had been taking place in the lives of these evangelicals as they had diversified and experimented with fresh expressions of their evangelical faith. It is these contextualised embodied practices of handing on the message of *Journey Into Life* in the ongoing lived religion of evangelicals that is the subject of this next section.

Employed in the Business of Faith

As discussed in chapter four a surprise discovery unforeseen in the research design was that all of the participants in this research had over time become employed in the business of faith through some form of full time Christian ministry following on from their reception of *Journey Into Life*. Out of the twelve core participants, two were evangelists, four were Anglican vicars, one was an Archdeacon, one a religious administrator, one was in training for Ordained ministry, one was a vicar's wife, one was a professor of theological education and one had been a General Practitioner but is also ordained in the Church of England. These participants had found their way into roles where they had opportunities to share their faith in different ways through the medium of their employment in professional Christian ministry. What emerges is a picture of diversification in the expression of evangelicalism through the participant's engagement within and around the formal structures of the Church, particularly the Church of England. As demonstrated earlier in the research, participants would claim to be holding onto the evangelical faith that they were introduced to through *Journey Into Life*, as well as expressing a desire and personal commitment to the handing on of that faith. However, what surfaced in the

interview data was that even from within this small sample, different and diverse ways of handing on the message had been developed particularly in the context of the participant's professional lives. What follows is an analysis of these diverse ways that the *Journey Into Life* alumni had, over time, developed for handing on the message of the tract.

A Theological Catalyst

Journey Into Life was the catalyst that propelled King into a life's work dedicated to theological study and to the development of theological education in secondary schools through his teaching and writing as a professor of theological education in the academy. The *Journey Into Life* booklet formed part of his earliest theological library and from a quite a young age he was aware that he was 'thinking theologically'.⁴⁷ He had recognised that he was on a journey into theology and that his bedside library of *Journey Into Life* and the Bible was 'the start of it'.⁴⁸ King's thinking was not restricted to the sphere of personal faith as he went on exploring and learning through dialogue and conversation, particularly as an undergraduate and graduate student of theology.⁴⁹ Through the medium of professional research, and later teaching theological educators in the academy, King worked with the principle that educators particularly in the dominant atheistic milieu should be able to 'tell that story' and students should have the opportunity to listen to and hear that Christian story.⁵⁰ King had been constantly motivated by his own inner theological imperative that had driven a life time of commitment to encouraging the telling of the Christian story in the context of religious education.⁵¹ King's retrospective reflection was that *Journey Into Life* had played a function 'which may not have been intended' and 'that function wasn't that it introduced him to something' but that it was 'the systematic reflecting on something'.⁵² So, what King had realised was that

⁴⁷ King, p. 3.

⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 8.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 5.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 15.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 12. 'My constant thing is where is the theology here?'

⁵² Ibid. p. 13.

Journey Into Life 'shaped him'⁵³ introducing him to a practice of theological questioning that had not only been a primary motivator in his own life but had been something that he had been constantly passing onto his students for over thirty years and in this way *Journey Into Life* was being handed on.

Enabling Evangelists

From his first day as a Christian Wood has been giving out *Journey Into Life* and many other booklets. Indeed, he had even written, published and printed his own booklets for distribution at his evangelistic events. Wood showed me one of his recent booklets that he had just had published with an initial print run of two hundred and fifty thousand copies. However, he commented that the research interview had prompted him to think that it was 'time to go back to the drawing board on these booklets to create and produce something that's much more accessible'.⁵⁴ Wood felt that these things should be made available for download but his conviction as a working evangelist was that 'people still need something in their hands'.⁵⁵ Having begun by handing out *Journey Into Life* forty years ago, Wood said that he was following 'the whole Peter thing, [to] always be prepared'⁵⁶ and was still handing out booklets, as well as writing and publishing them himself and continuing to think about how to produce one that could be given to 'anyone, anytime, anywhere'.⁵⁷ Like Wood, the evangelist Ford saw *Journey Into Life* as a very helpful tool but had adopted a different approach to handing on its message. Working as an Anglican Diocesan Mission advisor Ford was encouraging people towards a more embodied approach by teaching people how to share their faith through learning to tell their own faith story. These stories were not necessarily conversion stories but were more ordinary occurrences, like how the person came to be singing in the choir and what that meant to them. Ford was helping people in local churches to tell their stories of

⁵³ Ibid. p. 6.

⁵⁴ Wood, p. 30.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 32.

⁵⁶ Referring here to the scripture 1 Peter 3.15 which says: 'Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have'.

⁵⁷ Wood, p. 30.

faith as a way of breaking out of the thinking that faith is a personal matter and not something that you talk about.⁵⁸ Ford also said that he could imagine that a lot of church people would ‘freak out’ at *Journey Into Life* in its original form as ‘it mentions hell, it mentions sin, it’s the stuff that’s not PC’.⁵⁹ Despite these sensitivities, Ford recognised his emotional attachment to *Journey Into Life* that gave him a desire to ‘keep this on the table,’ something which he tries to do when he is training evangelism enablers for work in Anglican Parishes.⁶⁰ His *Journey Into Life* roots were expressed through the description of his professional objectives when he said that ‘one of the things I am trying to keep on the agenda, on the syllabus is leading someone to Christ’.⁶¹ This showed the influence and impact of the *Journey Into Life* paradigm of evangelism and how it is being handed on in the lived religion of a contemporary evangelist trainer.

Vicars and Tracts

Reception of *Journey Into Life* and its message was integral to the faith narratives of the five clergy that participated in this research. If the Archdeacon and Ordinand are included it means that fifty percent of this sample are actively engaged as clergy in the Church of England.⁶² However, despite its formative influence on these vicars, only Wells was still handing on the contemporary version of *Journey Into Life* in the context of his Anglican Parish Ministry. He said that he hadn’t ‘found anything better or simpler or clearer’,⁶³ and that it was the ‘the most natural thing in the world’ for him to have a copy of *Journey Into Life* ‘knocking about’. Wells said that he still uses it ‘in many ways’⁶⁴ particularly when he is telling his own story of coming to faith through reading *Journey Into Life*. He says to his audiences ‘it helped me, you’ve heard my story, why don’t you take

⁵⁸ Ford, p. 12.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 13.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 14.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Based on my experience of the number of responses to presentations about this research amongst groups of clergy on research conferences and clergy gatherings over the last five years, my suspicion [backed by some initial indicative evidence] is that if a comprehensive survey of all Anglican clergy were conducted then there would be a significant number of vocational stories emanating from early encounters with *Journey Into Life*.

⁶³ Wells, p. 9.

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 8.

it?’⁶⁵ In his ministry in the local church, Wells says of *Journey Into Life* that ‘it works’,⁶⁶ it doesn’t argue ‘it just presents’ and he described it as ‘very beautiful’.⁶⁷ In contrast to Wells, May and Hurst’s narratives showed that whilst having a significant emotional attachment to *Journey Into Life* it had not been incorporated into their current practice in Anglican Parish Ministry. May was still handing on the message of *Journey Into Life* but had adopted the Alpha course booklet called *Why Jesus?* He said that whilst feeling ‘a little bit of emotional sadness,’ that *Why Jesus?* had ‘pushed *Journey Into Life* to one side’ he felt that ‘*Journey Into Life* has now gone because we’re into *Why Jesus?*’⁶⁸ Like May, Hurst wanted to honour Warren’s ‘heart’ and ‘passion for the gospel’ that produced ‘something that could see people’s lives changed’,⁶⁹ but felt that it was ‘not the best tool for evangelism’ today.⁷⁰ At the large Anglican suburban church where Hurst had recently taken over as Vicar he said that ‘we don’t use *Journey Into Life*, we give people copies of *Why Jesus?* the Alpha thing’.⁷¹ Dench shared this clerical ‘fondness’ for *Journey Into Life* which he said he ‘liked much more than some of the stuff that comes out of Holy Trinity Brompton’,⁷² and he thought that *Why Jesus?* and ‘those kind of things, just don’t quite hit the same’.⁷³ His self-confessed post-modern approach to evangelism meant that Dench did not use *Journey Into Life* or any other booklet that followed ‘the pattern of getting down on their knees in a quiet place and praying to God and saying please come into my life and turn me around’.⁷⁴ Instead, Dench preferred to help people to ‘get God’s grace’ in their ‘journey of faith rather than as a decision point’.⁷⁵ However, he did recognise that amongst some of the people who he had been working with in his ministry there were ‘lots and lots of young people especially young men’ who he said were ‘looking for certainty and they

⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 10.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 11.

⁶⁸ May, p. 14.

⁶⁹ Hurst, p. 16.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 14.

⁷¹ Ibid. p. 13.

⁷² Dench, p. 16.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 14.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

like the fact that there is a certain answer'.⁷⁶ He felt that *Journey Into Life* could work today amongst these people who he described as 'not quite so thoughtful or well-educated and were looking for answers rather than thinking they knew the answers themselves'.⁷⁷

As someone who had handed on this booklet in the context of youth ministry, Chester had in her preparation for Ordination been wrestling with the disconnection between her own decision-based *Journey Into life* conversion narrative and her recent pre-ordination theological reflection on her faith journey. Her interview transcript demonstrated a tension between her long held *Journey Into Life* decision narrative and an emerging perspective that involved looking back into childhood and realising that God was already there before the 'decision for Christ'.⁷⁸ Indeed, the process of coming for the research interview had 'got her thinking back' and Chester had found herself re-evaluating her childhood experiences of knowing Jesus with her and praying every night by herself in secret because she was aware that her parents did not share her faith.⁷⁹ She was wrestling with her own narrative and the realisation that she may have superimposed the *Journey Into Life* narrative onto her own story that showed evidence of a strong childhood faith. The interview also initiated new thinking for her about the nature of the gospel itself as indicated in her rhetorical question 'it's still the gospel, isn't it?'⁸⁰ As with the other clergy in this research, Chester had engaged in the handing on of this specific decision based message in her early ministry but in preparation for ordination she was beginning to engage with the challenge of an Anglican Parish Ministry where the congregation might well hold to a different type of faith narrative that rejects this gospel paradigm and the idea of a fixed-point decision.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 15.

⁷⁸ Chester, p. 9.

⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 5.

⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 19.

Camp Fires and Festivals

May's interview that identified his ongoing practice of handing on *Journey Into Life* at youth camps by providing the tract for his team leaders to give to young people in the context of their conversations, preferring *Journey Into Life* for use with teenagers on the camps.⁸¹ The only change in his practice was that he had moved over to using the most recent version of *Journey Into Life* which retains the original text but replaces the illustrations with photographs. This new version was also being used at the high profile and large evangelical Christian Festival called 'New-Wine' that was visited as part of this research to identify and recruit potential interview participants.⁸² Although the event was targeted at Christians, there were several activities directed towards those with no faith [or a different faith] in the form of a discussion group called 'just looking' where the booklet being used and gifted in a low-key apologetics class was *Journey Into Life*. As already demonstrated, the evangelical 'Argo' in the form of camps and house parties had historically been one of the major sites of engagement with *Journey Into Life* and even with the diversification of these camps into festivals such as 'New Wine,' it was still being handed on in this context.

Something in Their Hands

At interview, Clements said that his commitment to teach and preach was connected right from those opening months of reading *Journey Into Life*, with the vision and desire to engage with culture, and 'the implications of the gospel in a cultural context'.⁸³ His narrative showed that he had been quick to embrace new media in the form of the development of the internet in the late 1990s, and he was one of the first Anglican clergy to get his own website and promote his message through this medium. The catalyst for this had been a newspaper executive who had challenged Clements saying, 'you've got a great message; you have got to learn how to put it into the idiom and into the media of today's

⁸¹ May, p. 10.

⁸² Anne Herne and Carrie Chester were recruited as research participants through adverts placed on notice boards at this event.

⁸³ Clements, p. 13.

generation'.⁸⁴ Clements thought, drawing on the language of John 3, that the potential audience for *Journey Into Life* was often the 'Nicodemus' type who came looking for Jesus by night, meaning in secret. He felt that today's Nicodemus would be 'going on line' to look at 'the stuff' about Jesus so that no one else need find out about their interest or search.⁸⁵ To support this view he cited his wife's experience of a recent conversation with a fellow passenger on a train who was reading the Bible on her phone. When questioned she said that she was not a Christian but had downloaded the Bible so that she could read it for herself without any contact with a Church or another Christian.⁸⁶ Herne was not so concerned about transferring the information to an 'App' or a website in order to hand on the message of *Journey Into Life*, but felt that the road sign symbols did not carry the same level of meaning that would be conveyed today by computer style 'icons'. She felt that phone icons would carry the meaning more effectively, because not only are the symbols much more familiar today, but they could be just be looked at and the reader would 'know the meaning without having to think about it'.⁸⁷ Wood also still believed in booklets but thought that it was 'time to go back to the drawing board on these booklets and create and produce something that's more accessible'.⁸⁸ Speaking from his perspective and experience as an evangelist Wood emphasised the importance of having something that you can 'feel', as he said that 'you can make this available as a download, you can make it available as this, or this and this, but people still need something in their hands'.⁸⁹ This attachment to the haptic and physical aspects of this article of faith was taken to an altogether higher plain in Brown's life narrative.

Broken Bodies of Christ

For Brown, handing on the message is achieved through an embodied approach

⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 16.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Herne, p. 15.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 30.

⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 32.

that uses her own broken body as a question mark to the people who encounter her. Wearing the symbol of her status as an ordained priest in the form of a dog collar and moving around in her electric wheel chair, unable to speak coherently without stammering, and unable to support herself physically in an upright position, she finds that her broken body raises the question marks for her and opens the door for conversations about her faith in Christ. She said that 'generally, when they see me in this [body] their brains do this thing', [by which Brown meant that people look at her, indeed stare at her, and say to themselves] 'she doesn't look like a vicar, how does that work?' She said that the question her embodied faith raises in the minds of the people she meets is, 'she doesn't look like a vicar because she's not the shape that I recognise vicars come in'. The people she meets regularly ask her 'why she would want to become a vicar and how did she get there?'. Brown was careful to point out that she was not 'deliberately teasing people', but likes to 'allow the moment', so that people ask themselves the question, 'how does that work', and that question becomes her 'opportunity'.⁹⁰ Brown's context for this embodied 'handing on' of her faith is significant as she works in an area with very high levels of social deprivation, 'on just about every level you can think of'. She reported that this juxtaposition between her broken body and her declared faith allowed her to say things like, 'I'm really glad I saw you today 'cos I think you matter'. The people who talk with Brown are those who have high levels of contact with the social services and she said that they are quite used to being told that they are 'quite bad, and that they are not doing a very good job' [of life]. So, Brown's message is that 'they matter to God' and she affirms that by saying things like 'God thinks you're fantastic, I know your life doesn't feel fantastic because you're living in a crappy house and you've got no money', but you matter to God. She said that there is no point in telling a single parent with no money that Jesus loves her if she doesn't know where her next meal is supposed to be coming from. So, 'what you do is make sure she can eat', and 'that kind of interests people', and then she says to them, 'you are doing a really good job, you are doing the best you can and Jesus loves

⁹⁰ Brown, pp. 14-16.

you and you are really important to me and they go'. Brown summarized her approach as:

Starting from where these people are, show them some empathy and recognition for where they are, and it's about the transforming nature of hope and imagination.

Because as she said:

If you are stuck in those flats over there, it's very hard to imagine a different way and what faith allows you to do, is just to kind of lift your eyes above the horizon a bit, and just say well there might be a better way, and actually the mechanism for that is Jesus.⁹¹

Brown was clear about her motivation for handing on the message, as demonstrated in her statement, that 'the driver for me comes from a place of faith and commitment'.⁹² However, her method was not *Journey Into Life*, instead her own embodied faith was her method, in the form of her broken body and the questions that this form of embodiment brought to the consciousness of the people she was with in her work as a vicar, in a highly socially deprived neighbourhood. Through this sacramental act, handing on the broken body of Christ through her own broken body, a proclamation was taking place, embodied in the handing on of her faith as a gift, the gift of herself in the form of her own broken body, as a sign of hope and encouragement, for people to reach out and beyond their present circumstances.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid. p. 15.

Chapter Nine – Mapping the Theology of *Journey Into Life*

The Theological Landscape of *Journey Into Life*

Theological Triangulation Points

The aim of this chapter is to identify and map the evangelical theology behind the practice of the gifting and exchange of the article of faith *Journey Into Life*. As demonstrated in the work of Mauss and Malinowski in chapter four, spiritual mechanisms in the form of powerful beliefs and myths drove and motivated the *kula* fleets to take their gifts to the ends of their known world.¹ By getting inside the belief system that motivated the *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*,² these ethnographic pioneers were enabled to locate and identify the total phenomena or *prestation* that undergirded this activity around which their whole society was built. In a similar way, by getting inside this specific theological system of these *Journey Into Life* participants as recorded in the interview research data, the powerful motivating beliefs of the evangelical ‘Argo’ are uncovered to reveal a distinctive and unique theological landscape within which this specific practice of evangelism is located. This survey maps the unique theological topography from within the narratives of encounter with *Journey Into Life* to expose the espoused theology of the research participants as well as the operant theology within the practice of the gift exchange itself.³ These voices of espoused and operant theology from within the data have been mapped using three major theological reference points that locate these theological disclosures within the categories of formal and normative evangelical theology.⁴ The first theological reference point in the data⁵ identified through engagement with formal evangelical

¹ See chapter 4 Marcel Mauss and The Gift.

² Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*.

³ ‘Espoused theology’ defined as ‘the theology embedded within the group’s articulation of its beliefs’ and ‘operant theology’ as ‘the theology embedded within the actual practices of the group’. See Helen Cameron and others, *Talking about God in Practice*, p. 54.

⁴ Ibid. ‘Formal theology’ understood as ‘the theology of theologians’ and the ‘normative theology’ of the scriptures, creeds, church teaching and liturgies.

⁵ In chapter 5 in the reader response and interaction with the text and pictures of *Journey Into Life*.

theology showed the importance of a soteriology that presented the doctrine of atonement as objective, penal and substitutionary with an emphasis on propitiation and union with Christ. The second reference point was found in an implicit rather than explicit pneumatology built on union with Christ through adoption as evidenced in both inferential and immediate assurance. The third reference point in the data in chapter four and eight identified the distinctive missional ecclesiology developed by the evangelical 'Argo', stemming from the prioritisation of the Great Commission in Matthew 28.19-20. However, before engaging in the process of analysing and triangulating these three theological reference points in the soteriology, pneumatology and ecclesiology of the participants' data it is important to explain how a normative evangelical theology has been identified for the purposes of this specific analysis of the theological topography of *Journey Into Life*.

Normative Evangelical Theology

Cameron points out that the normative voice of theology is 'concerned with what the practicing group names as its theological authority',⁶ but also concedes that identifying what is normative theology for a particular practitioner group can sometimes be difficult.⁷ In his search for the normative voice of Pentecostal theology Cartledge uses denominational confessional statements, Biblical material as well as hymnody, while Christie finds her 'touchstones' for these 'doctrinal norms'⁸ in western confessional creeds. As already noted it is through specific biblical texts that the normative theological function is played out within *Journey Into Life* itself.⁹ For the evangelicals of the *Journey Into Life* 'Argo' the Bible has been its primary source of normativity, a view endorsed by Packer when he says that its 'basic principle is that the teaching of the written Scriptures is the word which God spoke and speaks to his Church, and is finally

⁶ Cameron and others p. 54.

⁷ Ibid. p. 55.

⁸ In Nicaea and Chalcedon.

⁹ See footnote on proof texting chapter six 'Jesus at the Door' and Alister McGrath, *Christianity's Dangerous Idea*, p. 103.

authoritative for faith and life'.¹⁰ Within the overall material culture of the 'Argo'¹¹ there was evidence of the normative role played by youth choruses and songs for modern congregations in the growing evangelical churches of the 1960s and 70s¹² and therefore these have also been employed in the process of mapping the theological landscape of the evangelical 'Argo'.¹³ In identifying normative theology within evangelicalism there is a sizeable middle ground, or as Ward argues a continuum between the academic and the ordinary.¹⁴ This middle ground was, in the period under research, inhabited not only by the theology of 'the pew',¹⁵ but by influential theological practitioners in the form of prominent preachers, whose evangelical theology reached their mass domestic and international audience through recorded transcripts and books.¹⁶ This normative evangelical theology of the 'preachers' was often in the form of transcribed homiletics using the bible as its norm and as Cartledge points out 'cannot be regarded as necessarily naïve or simplistic'.¹⁷ However, whilst this informal evangelical theology met the needs of the 'Argo', what it has not provided is a systematic evangelical theology as such and any engagement with its normative content would have to take place through interrogation of piecemeal writings as well as published and recorded sermons, making it difficult to develop a coherent and accurate illustrative and representative evangelical theology with which to conduct this analysis.¹⁸ Therefore, it is with these considerations in mind that the following approach was developed.

¹⁰ J.I. Packer, *'Fundamentalism' and the Word of God* (London: Inter-varsity Fellowship, 1958), p. 47.

¹¹ See chapter 2 Material Culture Theory. Material culture research examines the objects, spaces, practices and ideas in which belief takes shape.

¹² The author of Warren of *Journey Into Life* also wrote and extensively promoted songs and choruses for youth. See acknowledgements of Warren's contributions in Baughan; Michael A. Baughan, 'Psalm Praise', (London: Falcon Books, 1973).

¹³ Pete Ward, *Selling Worship*, p. 25. 'Youth Praise reflects the values of 1960s evangelicalism'.

¹⁴ Ward, p. 48. See chapter 2, 'practical theology and ordinary theological reflection'.

¹⁵ Mark Cartledge, *Testimony in the Spirit*, p. 16.

¹⁶ Notably Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones at Westminster Chapel, Dr. John Stott at All Souls Langham Place and Dick Lucas at St Helens' Bishopsgate. Bebbington describes Lloyd-Jones and Stott as 'pulpit giants' and Lucas as 'a powerful London preacher'. Bebbington, pp. 258-61.

¹⁷ Cartledge, p. 16.

¹⁸ Alister McGrath, *The J.I. Packer Collection* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), p. 8. 'An immensely prolific writer, who has authored some three hundred works'.

Heuristic Model

For a critical theological dialogue and analysis of the research data a heuristic model of formal twentieth-century evangelical theology has been developed using three key voices. These voices were selected on the basis that they had been extensively used by the mid to late twentieth-century evangelical 'Argo' in the construction of its formal theology. This model is illustrative and heuristic¹⁹ rather than exhaustive offering a diagnostic research tool that provides an illustrative norm and cognitive map against which the research data can be measured. To construct this heuristic model, three influential academic and systematic theologians have been selected based on the criteria of their popular impact amongst the United Kingdom evangelicals between 1963 and 1989.²⁰ The first of these is Berkhof whose evangelical and reformed '*Systematic Theology*'²¹ was a standard text in evangelical theological colleges from its publication in 1932. The second voice from the middle of the period under research is that of Packer whose popular evangelical theology, particularly his work published in 1973 under the title '*Knowing God*',²² became part of the normative theology for many mid twentieth-century *Journey Into Life* evangelicals.²³ The third is Grudem whose '*Systematic Theology*'²⁴ provided a standard reference work for later *Journey Into Life* evangelicals.²⁵ Together these three formal theological voices of the evangelical 'Argo' have enabled the construction of an heuristic model, against which the voices of espoused and operant theology from within the *Journey Into Life* research sample has been mapped and analysed theologically.

¹⁹ A heuristic model that is illustrative rather than exhaustive, sufficient and effective as a practical method.

²⁰ Whilst contemporary American theologians such as Oden and Carson were also considered, these domestic voices of twentieth-century evangelical theology were more consistent with the aim of drawing out the nuanced differences and inconsistencies from within British evangelicalism itself. See footnote below about the selection of Grudem.

²¹ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* 1971 edn (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1932).

²² J.I. Packer, *Knowing God* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1973).

²³ McGrath describes Packer as 'a major theologian'. McGrath, p. 8.

²⁴ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994).

²⁵ Ibid. p. 1031. Particularly after an extensive lecture tour of United Kingdom universities in the mid-1990s. Grudem took the 'middle' ground on the cessation of miraculous gifts after the apostolic period popularising his theology with those evangelicals who had embraced the 'charismatic movement' and a non-cessationist theological position.

The Voices of Evangelical Soteriology

Evangelical Soteriology

Berkhof's systematic theology puts forward a Calvinistic reformed theological position focussing attention on the theological, rather than the anthropological, and placing the 'work of God rather than the work of man definitely in the foreground'.²⁶ Berkhof emphasises an objective rather than a subjective understanding of a 'vicarious' atonement, when he says that 'God appointed a vicar²⁷ in Jesus Christ to take man's place, and the vicar atoned for sin and obtained an eternal redemption for man'.²⁸ Grudem also prioritises an objective over a subjective understanding but concedes that 'secondarily it does have an application to us'.²⁹ This vicarious and substitutionary atonement is seen as penal in the sense that the penalty for sin is being met in the substitute who is Christ.³⁰ Packer follows this reformed objective explanation of the atonement placing the very heart of the Christian gospel in the 'propitiation of God's wrath against us'.³¹ Grudem also explains the atonement in the same terms explaining that Christ 'took the penalty due for our sins and as a result died for our sins'.³² This was the formal academic reformed evangelical soteriology of the evangelical 'Argo' that Warren adopted in his writing of *Journey Into life* in 1963, reflected not only in the text and illustrations of *Journey Into Life*,³³ but also reiterated and reinforced through hymnody particularly in the songs and choruses of *Youth Praise*.³⁴ The justification for the use of this soteriology by the 'Argo' was not only theological but pragmatic, as in the case of the author who discovered this as the best way of explaining the atonement to the young miners and their families in the community of Bedworth in 1963.³⁵ As previously demonstrated,³⁶

²⁶ Berkhof, p. 415.

²⁷ Berkhof uses the word vicar in its original sense from the Latin *vicarious* meaning substitute.

²⁸ Berkhof, p. 375.

²⁹ Grudem, p. 570.

³⁰ Berkhof, p. 378.

³¹ Packer, p. 211.

³² Grudem, p. 570.

³³ Warren, pp. 8-9. See chapter one Description of the Tract.

³⁴ Baughan, p. 112. in lyrics such as 'for you, whose sin he bore a promise he provides' reinforcing this theology of 'His Sacrifice' that 'He'll not repeat'.

³⁵ Warren, p. 8. The mining community near Coventry where Warren went to serve as a curate in the Church of England in 1960.

³⁶ In chapter 5 Doctrine Articulated on the Page.

simplicity and clarity were important factors in the presentation of the soteriology of *Journey Into Life* enabling readers to make sense of the sacrifice of Christ, which for research participants like Dench was the 'critical thing'.³⁷ The simple illustrations of two sides of the same coin permeated and stuck in the memory offering a very simple but effective and highly condensed exposition of God's love and justice in propitiation.³⁸ As Chester explained this simple picture 'just sort of 'clicked' and 'made sense' in such a way that she questioned why nobody ever explained it in this way before.³⁹ This presentation 'worked' because as Wells said it was for them 'so simple' and 'commonsensicle'⁴⁰ in helping them to understand and explain the work of Christ.⁴¹

Evangelical Soteriology in Practice

Whilst this explanation of the atonement made 'total sense' and 'clicked immediately'⁴² with some, for others as indicated in Brown's interview data, there was clear evidence of confusion, and indeed hostility, that took place in her initial engagement with this *Journey Into Life* soteriology.⁴³ The Brown narrative showed the effects of this distinctive soteriology within the 'lived' experience of somebody being gifted this tract in a significantly different type of interpretative community. The consequences of this reception of *Journey Into Life*, where the distinction between an objective and subjective soteriology was not made clear, are important because they show how a serious and harmful misunderstanding can occur in the transmission of what Packer describes as this normative evangelical 'heart of the gospel'.⁴⁴ Brown subjectivised the soteriology of the tract, later recognising that it 'majored on sin very heavily,' resulting in her physical disability becoming 'all kind of tied up with the whole thing of original

³⁷ Dench, p. 5. See also chapter five Conceptualising Faith Through Words.

³⁸ See chapter 5 Permeating Pictures.

³⁹ Chester, p. 4.

⁴⁰ Wells, p. 13.

⁴¹ At a presentation of this research to a youth ministry research day at Kings College London one person engaged in youth ministry expressed this pragmatic paradox in the form of a question: 'Why does this work when it shouldn't?'

⁴² Chester, p. 4.

⁴³ See analysis in chapter 5 under the heading Reactionary Reader Response.

⁴⁴ Packer, p. 211.

sin'.⁴⁵ Using highly subjective language she said that 'the only understanding I had of the whole idea of sin was that it must be all to do with me, and how bad I'd been at some kind of unspecified point'.⁴⁶ Brown grasped the idea of the 'penalty' of sin, but connected it with her disability and came to the conclusion that she was intrinsically bad. The result was confusion, because 'on the one hand the booklet seemed to be saying you are not actually worth anything because you are a sinful person, but Jesus loves you'.⁴⁷ Reflecting retrospectively on this theological confusion, Brown realised that what she needed at the time was someone to explain it to her and the opportunity to talk it through, pointing to the need for more dialogue about the personal application of the objective reformed evangelical soteriology adopted by Warren in *Journey Into Life*.⁴⁸

Hurst's narrative demonstrated two very different receptions of the tract's presentation of penal substitutionary atonement. Hurst's own reception in the context of the evangelical Argo was that he:

Was kind of aware that there were things that Jesus had done for me, that he was taking my place on the cross, he died for my sins, and that by believing in the story my life would be changed.⁴⁹

However, when Hurst offered the tract to another person this presentation of the atonement was fiercely rejected by the respondent who said 'it is just not what I believe about God'.⁵⁰ Reflecting on the experience of this rejection of *Journey Into Life* Hurst said 'I think the theology behind it, I think there could be a problem',⁵¹ however at the point of interview Hurst had not taken this problem any further. This reformed evangelical understanding of the doctrine of atonement as a propitiation of God's wrath employed in *Journey Into Life*, was perceived by the recipient of Hurst's tract as presenting an angry and vengeful God and he rejected what he described as this 'awful' theology.⁵² The

⁴⁵ Brown, p. 7.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 13.

⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 12. 'I could have done with a sensible person with their head screwed on straight going [saying], this is what it means'.

⁴⁹ Hurst, p. 6.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 12.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 13.

⁵² Ibid. p. 12.

significance of this negative response is that it came from someone who was able to say that he had a simple belief in God and a Christian faith whilst strongly rejecting this particular understanding of the cross of Christ and its perceived presentation of God as 'just awful'.⁵³ What this represents is a 'gut level' response from the voice of ordinary theology against the notion of a God whose wrath needs to be appeased and pacified in propitiation.⁵⁴ The 'truth of propitiation' may indeed be for Packer and reformed evangelicals 'the vantage point like Snowdon'⁵⁵ so that 'when you are on top of the truth of propitiation, you can see',⁵⁶ but for others, as seen in the Hurst and Brown narratives this idea of God's holy wrath can be difficult to present, is easily misunderstood, and vehemently rejected.

Propitiation, Expiation and Exclusion

Dench's narrative showed a considerable level of uncertainty about the presentation of the tract's overarching narrative and he was not sure that *Journey Into Life* could work now because he thought that 'there are people today who would find it offensive'.⁵⁷ He felt that within his own postmodern context people were coming from a position of 'let's make up our own mind and decide for ourselves what we need to do to be saved rather than here is the model'.⁵⁸ He sensed that they 'would want to argue the case' and that in:

The younger generation there are a good number of people around who would not accept that narrative as being a true one that they would subscribe to.⁵⁹

Even before the modernist period from which *Journey Into Life* was developed the idea of propitiation had faced serious criticism particularly in the wake of

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ To propitiate means to appease or pacify anger, specifically here the anger of God the Father propitiated by the sacrificial death of Jesus.

⁵⁵ Packer, p. 213.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Dench, p. 13.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 14.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Dodd's argument for the translation of propitiation⁶⁰ using the verb to expiate or cleanse, and shifting the emphasis away from the placation of an angry God and onto his loving action in forgiveness and the cleansing from sin.⁶¹ Importantly, and as indicated in *Journey Into Life* itself, the propitiation of reformed theology with its language of punishment is followed with the idea of expiation, as demonstrated in its use of the language of 'the removal of the barrier of sin between us and God'.⁶² However, even taking into account this progression from propitiation towards expiation and the inclusion of the language of expiation, this theology of propitiation was still felt by Hurst and Dench to be projecting an image of God as angry and even vengeful, which as Dench identified was an idea that his postmodern readers found 'offensive'.⁶³ The consequence of this representation of God from Packer's 'vantage point of propitiation'⁶⁴ may therefore in contemporary practice not be perceived to be the 'high ground' in the way that it has in the past. The simplicity and clarity of this soteriology that appealed so greatly to the 'modern' readers in this research, was as evidenced in Dench's interview, showing signs of being a liability in a postmodern environment that is generally suspicious, sceptical and highly epistemologically critical of such conceptual systems.⁶⁵ Not only is propitiation a point of theological friction and tension with post-modernity, it is also the cause of conflict within the evangelical 'Argo' itself. The encroaching post-modern doubts and questions about evangelical soteriology particularly propitiation and its perceived representation of God as vengeful, angry and abusive as indicated in the Dench narrative, has been played out in the public domain in both the United Kingdom and the United States. In the United States the prominent North American mega church leader Rob Bell whose self-identification as evangelical came under fire after he rejected penal and substitutionary atonement in his

⁶⁰ *hilaskomai* (to propitiate)

⁶¹ Charles Harold Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks* (London: Hodder, 1935), p. 5.

⁶² Warren, p. 8.

⁶³ Dench, p. 13.

⁶⁴ Packer, p. 213.

⁶⁵ Christopher Butler, *Postmodernism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 28-29.

book *Love Wins*,⁶⁶ and in the United Kingdom Steve Chalke (one of the most high profile leaders in evangelicalism), was ejected from the evangelical 'Argo' following his co-authoring of a book in which he publicly repudiated his previously held *Journey Into Life* theology of propitiation through substitution.⁶⁷ The voices of normative academic evangelical theology were quick to react in drawing attention to Chalke's departure from this evangelical theological norm with the result that he was subsequently excluded for having stepped outside the conservative evangelical interpretive community on this issue.⁶⁸ What this demonstrates in the mapping of the theological terrain of *Journey Into Life*, is the important normative theological role that this particular soteriology of propitiation through substitution has played and continues to play in the construction, identification and ongoing maintenance of a distinctive evangelical identity.⁶⁹

The Voices of Evangelical Pneumatology

Locating Evangelical Pneumatology

A most striking feature of *Journey Into Life* for the contemporary theological reader is the way that the Holy Spirit is only mentioned once, on the very last page of the booklet, where it says that Jesus Christ 'now lives in your heart by his Holy Spirit'.⁷⁰ Even more striking is that despite this absence of explicit teaching about the Holy Spirit, analysis of 'the spirit of the gift' data from the *Journey Into*

⁶⁶ Rob Bell, *Love Wins* (London: Collins, 2011); Mark Galli, 'Rob Bell's Bridge Too Far', (Christianity Today, 2011). Bell adopts an exemplar model of the Atonement.

⁶⁷ Chalke and Mann. Chalke was heavily criticised for expressing his view that penal substitutionary atonement was 'cosmic child abuse'. For clear statement of Steve Chalke's position see Derek Tidball and David Hilborn, 'The Atonement Debate: Papers from the London Symposium on the Theology of Atonement', (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), (p. 35).

⁶⁸ Madison Trammel, 'Cross Purposes', (Christianity Today, 2007), (p. 15). Evangelical gatekeepers Spring Harvest, Word Alive, Keswick Ministries and the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF) refused Steve Chalke a conference platform. UCCF said: 'Steve Chalke has made his dislike of penal substitution really, really clear, and ... we didn't feel the nature of the atonement was one of those things you could agree to disagree over'. Publisher Richard Herkes referred to these gatekeepers as 'evangelical guardians in the marketplace'. Herkes, p. 15.

⁶⁹ For contemporary normative conservative evangelical position see Steve Jeffery, Mike Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions: Rediscovering the Glory of Penal Substitution* (Nottingham: Inter -Varsity Press, 2007).

⁷⁰ Warren, p. 14.

Life interviews demonstrated a broad range of participants' epiphanies and encounters with the Spirit.⁷¹ These 'acute spiritual experiences' were shown in the data to be distinctly pneumatological with respondents reporting what Cartledge categorises as '*quasi-sensory experiences*',⁷² and physiological 'manifestations of the Holy Spirit' such as glossolalia,⁷³ feelings of 'heat'⁷⁴ and 'supernatural tingling'.⁷⁵ Even Brown who had initially rejected 'this stuff as bonkers' said that she had a spiritual experience in which she 'felt as if somebody had just kind of driven a truck straight into the middle of my chest'.⁷⁶ This data showed that *Journey Into Life* had a significant pneumatological impact whilst offering almost no explicit teaching about the Holy Spirit. However, this observation can be misleading because *Journey Into Life* does present an implicit pneumatology through its offering of 'friendship' with Jesus Christ as demonstrated in Brown's narrative where there was a particularly clear linking of her spiritual experience of getting 'hotter and hotter', with a felt presence of Jesus 'from a position behind my left shoulder', and Jesus saying to her, 'Carolyn, I love you'.⁷⁷ In the data, these narratives of encounter with the Holy Spirit were spoken of in the context of Jesus 'knocking' and 'asking to come in',⁷⁸ or as Wood's narrative so graphically depicted it, through 'Jesus breaking the door down'.⁷⁹ Any subjective experiential expectation that *Journey Into Life* builds is placed in the context of its presentation of what it might be like to have the experience of 'Christ in you'. Whilst the tract goes to some lengths to dissuade any form of experientialism by saying 'Don't rely on your feelings',⁸⁰ what it does promise based on Revelation 3.20, is that Jesus Christ will 'come in and live in your heart and life to be your friend to guide and be with you'.⁸¹ This implicit

⁷¹ See chapter 6

⁷² Cartledge, p. 89. '*Quasi-sensory experiences* are ones in which the key element is a physical sensation, or an association with one or more of the five senses'.

⁷³ Speaking in Tongues. Wood, p. 1.

⁷⁴ Brown, p. 10. Reported 'getting hotter and hotter and hotter'.

⁷⁵ Wells, p. 6.

⁷⁶ Brown, p. 10.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Warren, p. 13.

⁷⁹ Wood, p. 1.

⁸⁰ Warren, p. 14. The reader is encouraged to 'trust his sure promises'.

⁸¹ Ibid. p. 11.

Journey Into Life pneumatology framed in its ordinary theological category of friendship with Christ⁸² and rooted in Revelation 3.20, is located in formal systematic evangelical theology under the overall heading of 'The Doctrine of The Application of the Work of Redemption'⁸³ in what Berkhof calls 'The Mystical Union',⁸⁴ and Grudem describes as simply 'Union with Christ'.⁸⁵ Packer privileges the 'family idea' of the spirit of adoption given 'to make Christians realise with increasing clarity their filial relationship with God in Christ'.⁸⁶ Locating the evangelical research narratives within this formal theological reformed theology of federal union with Christ⁸⁷ offers a theological framework that is able to accommodate the apparent contradiction between participant's spiritual experiences associated with opening the door to Jesus and the minimalistic reference to the Holy Spirit in *Journey Into Life* itself.⁸⁸

Union with Christ in Evangelical Theology

In order to further identify and locate the *Journey Into Life* experience of opening the door to Jesus built around the metaphor of Revelation 3.20 with the theology of union with Christ, it is important to attend to the formal reformed evangelical voices of Berkhof, Packer and Grudem. In Berkhof the work of the Holy Spirit is closely tied in with Calvin's emphasis on 'union' with Christ in what he calls 'the mystical union'.⁸⁹ Berkhof steps back from what he identifies as the Lutheran tendency to treat the mystical union anthropologically and moves towards a reformed position that approaches the mystical union 'theologically' as the 'federal union of Christ and those who are his in the council of redemption'.⁹⁰

⁸² This is endorsed in the hymnody of the Argo. Baughan, p. 67. 'Wonderful Jesus, wonderful friend'.

⁸³ Berkhof, pp. 415-59.

⁸⁴ Ibid. pp. 447-53.

⁸⁵ Grudem, p. 840. Packer, p. 231. Packer privileges 'adoption' as the 'family idea where closeness, affection and generosity are at the heart of the relationship'.

⁸⁶ Packer, p. 231.

⁸⁷ See chapter 9 Union with Christ.

⁸⁸ Ward describes union with Christ as 'the subplot of evangelical soteriology' pointing out that whilst these ideas of union 'are there in *Peace with God* and *Basic Christianity* they are a kind of subplot'. Pete Ward, 'Union with Christ: The Subplot of Evangelical Soteriology', *Journal of Youth and Theology*, 2 (2003). P. 91.

⁸⁹ Berkhof, p. 447.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

This objective view is built on a legal and representative understanding of union with Christ, understood as a 'union of life' that 'now only awaits their subjective application' and realisation by the operation of the Holy Spirit'.⁹¹ He defines this union as:

That intimate, vital, and spiritual union between Christ and his people, in virtue of which he is the source of their life and strength, of their blessedness and salvation.⁹²

This union is understood to be mediated by and through the Holy Spirit as 'Christ now dwells in believers, unites them to himself, and knits them together in a holy unity'.⁹³ Packer also holds a reformed theology of union with Christ through the Holy Spirit but places 'adoption,' as 'higher' than justification because 'of what he argues is the richer relationship that it involves'.⁹⁴ Packer argues that Berkhof's treatment of adoption as 'a mere sub-section of justification' is 'inadequate', and that the 'vital truth to be grasped' here is that the Spirit is given to Christians as the Spirit of 'adoption', and 'as such, his task and purpose is to make Christians realise with increasing clarity the meaning of their filial relationship with God in Christ'.⁹⁵ Packer argues that Berkhof's emphasis on the 'forensic idea' although 'wonderful enough', does not of itself imply any intimate or deep relationship with God', and that 'you could have the reality of justification without any close fellowship with God resulting'.⁹⁶ Packer privileges 'adoption' because it is a 'family idea, conceived in terms of love, and viewing God as father, where closeness, affection and generosity are at the heart of the relationship'.⁹⁷ Grudem follows Packer in emphasising the importance of 'adoption' in bringing union with Christ saying that 'the Holy Spirit not only witnesses to us that we are God's children, but also witnesses that God abides in us and that we are abiding in him'.⁹⁸ At the time of the first publication of

⁹¹ Ibid. p. 449.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid. p. 450.

⁹⁴ Packer, p. 231.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 231.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Romans 8.15. Grudem, p. 644. Packer, p. 246. Both Packer and Grudem take this further by means of a Pauline theology of 'adoption' in Romans 8.16ff where Paul explains the subjective

Journey Into Life in 1963 nascent British Pentecostalism⁹⁹ was still to penetrate the mainline denominations through the Charismatic movement,¹⁰⁰ and yet as we have seen in the research data above there were significant Pentecostal style spiritual experiences in participant narratives as a result of receiving and responding to this objective, reformed and non-charismatic evangelical tract. By underpinning these experiences of opening the door and ‘accepting Jesus Christ into your life’¹⁰¹ in the union of the believer in Christ through adoption, the door is open theologically for the incorporation and acceptance of a wider spectrum of subjective spiritual experience within conservative evangelical pneumatology. This experience was very much in evidence in the Wood interview data when he described his experience following opening the door to Jesus. He said that not only did a ‘light come on’ and his ‘mind was illuminated’ but also using language that was reminiscent of Romans 8.16 he said ‘my heart was like Aargh!’¹⁰² Packer highlights this ‘dual witness’ that takes place in ‘adoption’ from ‘two distinct sources’¹⁰³ of ‘our spirit [that is, our conscious self], and God’s Spirit, who bears witness with our spirit’. It is this reformed evangelical theology of union with Christ mediated by the Holy Spirit through adoption that provides the formal theological framework for interpreting the pneumatological data in the espoused and operant theological voices of the *Journey Into Life* research.

Inferential or Immediate Assurance in *Journey Into Life*

Packer defines inferential assurance as:

A conclusion drawn from the fact that one knows the gospel, trusts Christ, brings forth works, meet for repentance, and manifest the instincts of regenerate man.¹⁰⁴

experience of union with Christ when he says of believers that by the ‘Spirit of sonship we cry *Abba*, Father’, and ‘the Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are the children of God’.

⁹⁹ Cartledge, pp. 1-6. For Pentecostal impact on evangelicalism in the first half of the twentieth century.

¹⁰⁰ This Reformed evangelical pneumatology has not deterred Pentecostals from using the tract, as evidenced by two of the research participants who were given *Journey Into Life* in Pentecostal churches.

¹⁰¹ Warren, p. 11.

¹⁰² Wood, p. 1.

¹⁰³ Packer, p. 253.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Whilst this does not rule out subjective experience of the Holy Spirit, the focus is on an objectively verifiable set of criteria against which a person can weigh up the authenticity of their profession of faith. *Journey Into Life* with its instruction not to rely on feelings and instead to ‘trust his sure promises’¹⁰⁵ is coming from this position of inferential assurance in its management of expectations with respect to the subjective experiential reception of the Holy Spirit. This inferential assurance is in evidence in the research data and is particularly striking in the Herne narrative where she says that for her it was ‘more of a process and was very much a journey’ in which the relationship [with Jesus] took time to develop’.¹⁰⁶ Such inferential assurance is balanced and complimented by experiences of ‘immediate assurance’, being understood as ‘the direct work of the Spirit in the regenerate heart, coming in to supplement the God prompted witness of our own spirit’.¹⁰⁷ This dual witness of the Spirit in evangelical theology is important in understanding the range of participant’s spiritual experience within the narratives of encounter. Whilst at first sight the ‘immediate’ and ‘acute’ experiences¹⁰⁸ of the Holy Spirit reported by some participants seemed to contradict the more ‘inferential’ process of cognitive reorientation¹⁰⁹ that took place over an extended period¹¹⁰ and even accommodated seasons of struggle, resistance and procrastination,¹¹¹ the research data demonstrated a good spread of both inferential and immediate participant experiences in relation to their spiritual engagement with *Journey Into Life*.¹¹² This evangelical theological distinction provided an important insight into the varieties of people’s experience with the spirit of the gift, not only in explaining the apparent contradiction between the theology of *Journey Into Life* and some people’s heightened spiritual experience, but also offering a way through conflicts between Charismatic and Classic evangelicals that polarise

¹⁰⁵ Warren, p. 14.

¹⁰⁶ Herne, p. 8.

¹⁰⁷ Packer, p. 254.

¹⁰⁸ See chapter 6 Acute Spiritual Experiences, and Wood, p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ See chapter 6 The Prayer with Thoughtful Responses.

¹¹⁰ See chapter 6 A Gift of Time.

¹¹¹ See chapter 6 Struggle, Resistance and Procrastination.

¹¹² See chapter 6 Prayer with immediate results versus thoughtful responses.

around either immediate or inferential assurance. These two resultant categories of inferential and immediate assurance¹¹³ offer a far more generous pathway to the incorporation of subjective spiritual experience within conservative evangelical pneumatology than is commonly recognised. The identification theologically of ‘personal union with Christ’¹¹⁴ retrieves the evangelical epiphany from being interpreted as solely a subjective mystical or emotional experience and instead locates it in the objective Reformed theology of federal union with Christ.¹¹⁵ This is not to devalue or ignore the phenomena of immediate assurance that are clearly visible in the data, but what it does is to bring a balance to our understanding emphasising not only immediate and subjective assurance, but also inferential assurance,¹¹⁶ with the corresponding objective theological and cognitive knowledge of God that is also evidenced in the data.¹¹⁷

Evangelical Ecclesiology

Evangelical Missionary Ecclesiology

When correlated with the voices of formal and normative evangelical theology from our heuristic model, the espoused and operant theological voices in the *Journey Into Life* data reveal a distinctive evangelical ecclesiology built on the foundation of an evangelical theology of mission. The evangelical ecclesiology of the ‘Argo’ was constructed around the transmission and exchange of the *Journey Into Life* message with the practice of evangelism amongst the *Journey Into Life* alumni revealing an assumed common theology of mission, endorsing Bebbington’s thesis that it is axiomatic that evangelicals will adopt a strategy of ‘activism’ in ‘conversionism’. Warren’s tract was built on an assumed theology of mission that as demonstrated in chapter four has its roots in both the pre-and post-second World War ‘revival’ movements in British Christianity.¹¹⁸ Evangelistic

¹¹³ Packer, pp. 253-54.

¹¹⁴ Berkhof, pp. 450-51. ‘Every believer is personally united directly to Christ. Every sinner who is regenerated is directly connected with Christ and receives life from him’.

¹¹⁵ See chapter 9 Union with Christ.

¹¹⁶ See chapter 9 Inferential and Immediate Assurance. Packer, p. 253. Inferential assurance is understood as ‘a conclusion drawn from the fact that one knows the gospel, trusts Christ, brings forth works, meet for repentance, and manifest the instincts of regenerate man’.

¹¹⁷ See chapter 6 Cognitive Convictions.

¹¹⁸ See chapter 4 The Evangelical Argo

literature from the 1930s reveals an assumption that Christians will ‘cast out their nets’¹¹⁹ and be actively engaged in evangelism. This evangelical theology of mission built around the ‘Great Commission’ was promoted within the ‘Argo’ through preaching and the promotion of historical missionary biography such as that of James Hudson Taylor,¹²⁰ C.T. Studd and biographical works by J.C. Ryle that fuelled a missionary minded culture where it was ‘taken for granted’ that if you were a Christian you would be involved in the missionary work of the church, to ‘fulfil’ the ‘Great Commission’. This missionary culture built around the ‘big idea’ of evangelism was ‘caught’ as much as ‘taught’, being reinforced by student churches that encouraged involvement in short term overseas mission work, as well as missionary medical electives for young doctors and health workers. It was this ordinary biblical theological imperative in the Great Commission of Jesus Christ that provided this dynamic theology of mission¹²¹ and concomitant ecclesial identity that developed around this evangelistic activism amongst these mid to late twentieth-century *Journey Into Life* evangelicals in the United Kingdom.

Uncomfortable Commissions

Grudem identifies and locates his own personal theological motivation for his work in systematic theology in his missiology which he builds on the ‘Great Commission’ of Jesus¹²² in Matthew 28.19-20.¹²³ As demonstrated in chapter eight there was within the data, an implicit and deeply imprinted biblical imperative to ‘go and make disciples of all nations’, that continued to provide a powerful motivating force in propelling these *Journey Into Life* Christians into

¹¹⁹ Garth Lean, *Cast out Your Nets: Sharing Your Faith with Others* (London: Grosvenor, 1990). Written for the ‘Oxford Group’ an [initially] evangelical revival movement in the 1930s.

¹²⁰ Howard Taylor, *Biography of James Hudson Taylor* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965); Norman Grubb, *C.T. Studd: Cricketer and Pioneer* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1970); J.C. Ryle, *Christian Leaders of the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1885).

¹²¹ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2008), p. 4. Bosch calls this the ‘minimal basis’ for mission.

¹²² Grudem, pp. 26-7. Grudem identifies his teaching of systematic theology as part of ‘the task of fulfilling the Great Commission’.

¹²³ Matthew 28. 19-20 ‘Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age’.

lives dedicated to Christian mission and evangelism. Wells demonstrated the impact of this commission based evangelism on his ecclesiology in its clear focus on giving and being given 'that' booklet.¹²⁴ Warren was re-envisioned in his later ministry as an Archdeacon in the Church of England when on sabbatical leave in Uganda he saw the church growing through commission based evangelists who were being 'called, trained and deployed' in evangelism.¹²⁵ Subsequently, and in the face of a lot of opposition from the Bishop's council, Warren set up a specific course in Frindsbury in the Diocese of Rochester for the training and deployment of evangelists, to enable parishes in North Kent to fulfil this Great Commission at a local level.¹²⁶ Warren explained that the 'bitter opposition' and the 'real battle' that he had in order to get this agreed with the Bishop's council was based on the ecclesiastical establishment's suspicion of 'anything evangelistic' and demonstrated the uncomfortable relationship that existed between a traditional Anglican ecclesiology and the commission based theology of the evangelical 'Argo'.¹²⁷

The Visible Evangelical Church

Two areas of theological tension were identified in the ecclesiological dialogue between reformed systematics and the data from the *Journey Into Life* evangelicals. The first concerns the Reformed distinction between the visibility and the invisibility of the church and the second centres around ecclesial identity in what Berkhof calls the 'marks of the church in particular'.¹²⁸ Berkhof reminds us of Luther's distinction between the visible and the invisible aspects of the church, and his understanding of the church as a spiritual communion of those who believe in Christ, with the invisible communion becoming visible through the pure administration of the word and sacraments. Visibility made manifest in the administration of the word and the sacraments, augmented by Calvin's requirement for the faithful administration of church discipline, provides Berkhof

¹²⁴ Wells, p. 10.

¹²⁵ Warren, p. 33.

¹²⁶ Ibid. p. 34.

¹²⁷ Ibid. p. 33.

¹²⁸ Berkhof, p. 560.

with his Reformed position. Both Packer and Grudem also emphasise invisibility particularly Grudem who says that 'in its true spiritual reality as the fellowship of all genuine believers, the church is invisible'.¹²⁹ As evidenced in chapter six the research participants had embraced a spiritual communion in the context of camps, youth groups and student groups as well as student specific churches where there was a consistent administration of the word, but no sacraments in terms of Baptism or Holy Communion and little by the way of Church discipline. In the early 1960s these evangelical groups, consisting of many young people who had been exposed to *Journey Into Life* and its evangelical theology, were largely invisible and ecclesologically insignificant.¹³⁰ One of the key vehicles for these *Journey Into Life* evangelicals transitioning into the visible church was the advent of the 'student churches' in the early 1960s, the very period that corresponds with the publication of the booklet. Clements recounted his experience of going up to Cambridge as a young *Journey Into Life* Christian where he 'quickly tapped into the CICCUC' and 'flitted' between St Matthew's church and Eden Baptist Church which both had influential student ministries.¹³¹ From within the research sample there was clear evidence of the *Journey Into Life* alumni becoming visible through migration into student churches which provided a gateway into denominational and more visible Church life.¹³²

Ecclesial Identity

Berkhof's identification of the three 'marks of the Church' ¹³³ as the true preaching of the word, the right administration of the sacraments and the faithful exercise of discipline was condensed in *Journey Into Life* into the instruction to 'join a local church at once,' and 'never miss being with Christians

¹²⁹ Grudem, pp. 585-86.

¹³⁰ Michael Saward, *Evangelicals on the Move* (London: Mobery, 1987), pp. 33-41. Shows the previously hidden but growing evangelical influence in the Anglican Church in this period. McGrath calls this period the 'Evangelical Renaissance'. Alister McGrath, *Evangelicalism and The Future of Christianity*, p. 9.

¹³¹ Clements, p. 5.

¹³² In 1965 Packer rejected Lloyd-Jones challenge for evangelical Anglicans to separate from the doctrinally mixed Anglican Church. Packer argued for a 'mixed-body' and this encouraged a young evangelical Anglican like Clements to remain within the visible state church, a church where in later life he became an Archdeacon.

¹³³ Berkhof, p. 577.

in Church on Sunday'.¹³⁴ As already noted those who came in through the 'Argo' tended to join the churches of the 'Argo' that subscribed to the *Journey Into Life* soteriology and approach to evangelism, with new believers being encouraged to join a 'bible believing' and 'bible teaching' church. A characteristic of these churches was that there was an emphasis on the 'true preaching of the word', modelled in this period by Dr John Stott who at All Souls Langham Place in central London, developed a popular expository preaching method and style that was widely copied in evangelical churches.¹³⁵ These 'preaching ministries' were augmented by means of Bible study groups often led by trainee preachers and teachers from within these evangelical churches. Clements said that going to Cambridge, listening to John Stott and then 'being very touched' by his evangelical social ethics [which influenced the Jubilee centre where Clements went on to work] all became a 'very strong component' of his faith and subsequent ecclesial involvement.¹³⁶ These larger *Journey Into Life* evangelical churches developed parallel structures, employing and training their own staff as well as building their own independent administrative and organisational systems and initiating what became a tendency in evangelicalism of building parallel structures outside of the control [and discipline] of the institutional churches.¹³⁷ These new and large evangelical churches formed the backbone of the developing evangelical 'Argo' not only providing the *Journey Into Life* Christians with a clear ecclesial identity, but also offering them alternative ecclesial structures in which to develop their faith and ministries.

The Theological Trialectic of *Journey Into Life*

Through the engagement of the espoused and operant theology of *Journey Into Life* with the formal and normative voices of the evangelical 'Argo' three major theological reference points have been identified and mapped. Through this process of theological triangulation, a map of the theological landscape of

¹³⁴ Warren. On the back inside cover.

¹³⁵ Popularised through the publication of *The Bible Speaks Today* series of commentaries.

¹³⁶ Clements, p. 10.

¹³⁷ In areas, such as full time Christian workers and lay staff teams, Christian musicians, Christian publishers, Christian counsellors and broadcasters as well as tour operators and merchandisers.

Journey Into Life has been drawn that enables the tract and its descendants to be identified and traced theologically. The first theological triangulation point in the data was found in the tract's soteriology that presented the doctrine of atonement as objective, penal and substitutionary with an emphasis on propitiation and union with Christ. The second triangulation point was found in the implicit rather than explicit pneumatology built on union with Christ through adoption evidenced in inferential and immediate assurance. The third triangulation point was the missional ecclesiology of the evangelical 'Argo' rooted in its implicit and explicit emphasis on the Great Commission in Matthew 28.19-20 and nurtured in visible evangelical ecclesial structures. This distinctive theological trialectic of evangelical soteriology, pneumatology and ecclesiology will now be employed in tracing the legacy of *Journey Into Life* in contemporary trends in evangelism.

Chapter Ten – The Legacy of *Journey Into Life*

This chapter analyses the legacy of the artefact *Journey Into Life* in evangelism trends post 1989.¹ Just as Mauss employed his ‘archaeological’² ethnographic data about ‘primitive’ market exchange to critique and inform his own contemporary economic context,³ this analysis takes the archaeology of evangelism embodied in the total prestation⁴ of the artefact *Journey Into Life* and uses it to critique and inform contemporary trends in evangelism.⁵ The history of effects⁶ is uncovered as the artefact’s distinctive theology and core research themes in the participant narratives are brought together with contemporary practices of evangelism, to reveal the continuity and discontinuity between the theology and practice of contemporary evangelicals with those of the *Journey Into Life* research sample.⁷ Three major trends in contemporary evangelism are drawn on for this comparative analysis, the first being the didactic ‘courses’ with a focus on *the Alpha Course*, the *Emmaus Course* and *Christianity Explored*.⁸ The second trend is in the fresh expressions and emerging church⁹ initiative of the *Messy Church*, with the third being the radical alternative found in the popularly named *treasure hunting* evangelism.¹⁰ Comparison of these trends with the total phenomena of *Journey Into Life* informs this analysis

¹ See chapter 3 for the five emergent themes identified as ‘given it, reading it, praying it, holding onto it and handing it on’.

² Mauss, *The Gift*, p. 2.

³ A context of economic crisis.

⁴ Mauss, *The Gift*, p. 1. The ‘total prestation’ in his theory is comprised of the ‘great mass of complex data’ in any gift exchange process under examination.

⁵ Ibid. p. 2. ‘These pages do no more than lead us to old problems which are constantly turning up under new guises’.

⁶ History of effects or *Wirkungsgeschichte* to borrow from Gadamer. Gadamer, pp. 311-18.

⁷ See chapter 3 for the five emergent themes identified as ‘given it, reading it, praying it, holding onto it and handing it on’.

⁸ Nicky Gumbel, *Questions of Life: A Practical Introduction to the Christian Faith* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications Limited, 1993), p. 19; Rico Tice and Barry Cooper, *Christianity Explored* (New Malden: The Good Book Company, 2002). Stephen Cottrell and others, *Emmaus the Way of Faith*, Second edn (London: Church House Publishing, 2003).

⁹ Graham Cray and others, *Mission-Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context* (London: Church House Publishing, 2004).

¹⁰ Kevin Dedmon, *The Ultimate Treasure Hunt: A Guide to Supernatural Evangelism through Supernatural Encounters* (Shippensburg: Destiny Image, 2007).

by tracking the extent to which contemporary evangelicals have positioned themselves in relation to the *Journey Into Life* paradigm. This comparative analysis offers a significant insight into contemporary pragmatic shifts and changes in evangelism, and the impact of these changes on evangelical identity. It starts by setting these trends in the context of the major developments in evangelism in Britain over the last twenty-five years.

Three Contemporary Trends

Stibbe identifies seven approaches to evangelism whilst the evangelist J. John brings together more than fifteen different methods in support of his thesis that there are 'more ways than one'.¹¹ Amongst this smorgasbord of trends in evangelism over the past twenty-five years there are three models that have led the field, and it is these market leaders, as noted above, that provide the evangelistic models for this comparative analysis. The first approach is located in programmatic evangelism through didactic courses,¹² each with their own unique history, although taken together they represent a turn towards what Rambo describes as 'process over event', marking a shift away from what he calls the 'popular mythology' of conversion as 'an overnight, all-instant, wholesale transformation'.¹³ The second major trend in evangelism is in what has come to be labelled as 'fresh expressions' of church that are intentionally positioned on the edge or outside of existing ecclesiastical structures. Croft describes their ethos in his introduction to the fresh expressions *Messy Church* initiative when he says that:

Across Britain, something is happening, Christians are starting fresh expressions of church for those who are on the outside or on the edge of the Christian community.¹⁴

¹¹ J. John, *More Ways Than One: Evangelism in the Post Modern World* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2009); Mark Stibbe, *Prophetic Evangelism: When God Speaks to Those Who Don't Know Him* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2004).

¹² *The Alpha course, Christianity Explored course* and the *Emmaus course*

¹³ Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, p. 1.

¹⁴ Lucy Moore, *Messy Church: Fresh Ideas for Building a Christ-Centred Community* (Abingdon: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2006), p. 9.

These emerging churches reflect what Cray describes as an ‘ongoing and shared calling to embody and inculturate the gospel in the evolving contexts and cultures of our society’.¹⁵ The third trend is the radical alternative of ‘prophetic evangelism’, more recently referred to as ‘treasure hunting’. It involves the practitioners listening to God for specific directions received in words or pictures and then following these clues to locate and engage with the people identified in the original prophetic guidance. Its roots are in Wimber’s ‘power evangelism’¹⁶ and the popularly named ‘signs and wonders’ movement of the 1980s,¹⁷ exemplifying the growth of Pentecostal influences on evangelicalism¹⁸ in its promotion of what has come to be described as ‘supernatural ministry’.¹⁹ As Luhrmann has observed in this form of evangelicalism it is assumed that ‘God talks back’²⁰ in a dynamic process forming the basis for engagement in the ‘ultimate treasure hunt’ aimed at people who have, according to these evangelists, been prepared by God for a supernatural encounter. These three contemporary trends in evangelism provide a comprehensive spread of evangelistic models for comparative analysis with the legacy of *Journey Into Life*.

The Legacy of *Journey Into Life* in Evangelistic Courses

The Alpha Course and The Legacy of *Journey Into Life*

Paradoxically the dawn of the so called ‘Decade of Evangelism’²¹ at the beginning of the 1990s²² marked a sharp decline in the sales of *Journey Into Life*. Part of the

¹⁵ Cray and others, *Mission-Shaped Church*, p. xii.

¹⁶ Wimber and Springer.

¹⁷ Robert Doyle, *Signs and Wonders and Evangelicals: A Response to the Teaching of John Wimber* (Randburg: Fabel 1987). A movement not embraced by all evangelicals.

¹⁸ Rich Nathan and Ken Wilson, *Empowered Evangelicals: Bringing Together the Best of the Evangelical and Charismatic Worlds* (Ann Arbor: Vine Books, 1995).

¹⁹ Gary Best, *Naturally Supernatural: Joining God in His Work* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing 2005).

²⁰ Tanya M. Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012).

²¹ Mike Booker and Mark Ireland, *Evangelism - Which Way Now? An Evaluation of Alpha, Emmaus, Cell Church and Other Contemporary Strategies for Evangelism.*, Second edn (London: Church House Publishing, 2005). The 1990s were declared as a decade of evangelism by British Churches but it was also a decade of numerical decline in church attendance.

²² Heard, pp. 15-16. The Alpha course was started in 1976 for people who had already become Christians but was re-invented by the new curate Nicky Gumbel who took over the course in 1990 and refocused it as an evangelistic rather than catechetical method.

reason for this was the rise of the Alpha Course and its tract *Why Jesus?*²³ Alpha, like *Journey Into Life*, was a product of the evangelical 'Argo' and a child of its iconic parent, carrying forward, democratising, and globalising its inherited theological and cultural identity through the evangelical 'Argo' to a new generation. Through its common theological and cultural heritage, the legacy of *Journey Into Life* was handed on to a new domestic and international market in the theological and cultural practices of the Alpha course. This inculturation for its new market retained the overall framework of *Journey Into Life* following a similar recipe in terms of its soteriology and ecclesiology whilst introducing an enhanced emphasis in its pneumatology. As identified in Heard's analysis of the Alpha course, it was significantly influenced theologically in its re-development by its context at Holy Trinity Brompton.²⁴ This church had embraced the 'signs and wonders movement' brought through Wimber's Vineyard Church movement but had also experienced an acceleration of growth through the so called 'Toronto Blessing', which in 1994 had a significant impact on the HTB leadership team including Gumbel the author of Alpha.²⁵ The effect of this was to bring together the *Journey Into Life* paradigm with an enhanced emphasis on what has been identified in this research as 'the spirit of the gift'. However, this close identification with the Alpha course and its distinctive pneumatology meant that unlike *Journey Into Life* the Alpha course did not achieve such broad ecclesial acceptance both within and beyond evangelicalism. This meant that whereas *Journey Into Life* was widely welcomed onto a Cathedral or parish church bookstall, the Alpha materials were often perceived as polemical and pushing a particular charismatic theological agenda that resulted in them being excluded not only from non-charismatic evangelical churches but also more significantly from the wider market place where *Journey Into Life* had previously achieved some significant visibility.²⁶

²³ Nicky Gumbel, *Why Jesus?*, (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications Ltd, 1991).

²⁴ Hereafter referred to as HTB

²⁵ Heard, *Inside Alpha*, pp. 13-14.

²⁶ This wider reach through bookstands had been part of a deliberate strategy in the development of Falcon booklets in the 1970s. Dudley-Smith. Correspondence.

Praying the Prayer on Alpha

As shown in chapter six and explained in chapter nine there was within *Journey Into Life* an implicit pneumatology in its presentation of union with Christ through opening the door and asking Jesus to come via the mechanism of praying the prayer. The Prayer of Commitment to Jesus Christ is introduced in Alpha at the end of the second session often through the use of the prayer in the *Why Jesus?* booklet,²⁷ and this is similar to Warren's invitation and prayer in *Journey Into Life*, where having used the metaphor of Revelation 3.20, readers are encouraged to 'accept Jesus Christ into [their] life to be [your] Lord to control you, [your] Saviour to cleanse you, [your] friend to guide you and be with you'.²⁸ Both the Alpha and the *Journey Into Life* prayers are addressed to the 'Lord Jesus Christ', and both invite Jesus to 'come into [my] life', but the Alpha prayer adds the words 'by your Holy Spirit', as well as thanksgiving for 'the gift of your Spirit', and that is the difference. It is important to note that *Journey Into Life* does not neglect the Holy Spirit as indicated in the next paragraph that says, 'you have asked Jesus Christ to come into your life and he has come. He now lives in your heart by his Holy Spirit'.²⁹ However this difference is important as it reflects an increased pneumatological emphasis in the theology of the 'Argo' through Alpha, that was further expanded both theologically and practically with three main sessions of the course dedicated to teaching about the Holy Spirit and how to receive the gift of the Spirit. The language of reception of the gift shifted from receiving Jesus to receiving Jesus and the Holy Spirit', reflecting a wider move³⁰ in contemporary evangelical identity away from an implicit pneumatology towards a more explicit expression that emphasises 'by my spirit'.³¹

Immediate and Inferential Assurance in Alpha

Journey Into Life reflects its conservative and reformed evangelical heritage with an inferential rather than experiential expectation in terms of assurance of

²⁷ Gumbel, *Why Jesus?* p. 18.

²⁸ Warren, *Journey Into Life*, p. 11.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 14.

³⁰ Albeit it a contested one.

³¹ Gumbel, *Questions of Life*, p. 55. See also Zechariah 4.6 for the biblical source of these words.

salvation. The instruction not to 'rely on your feelings; you may not feel any different at the moment',³² in *Journey Into Life* is in marked contrast to the exhortation to experience being filled with the Spirit found in the Alpha Course talks.³³ The progression of the Alpha talks on the Holy Spirit build a sense of expectation in terms of experiencing the spirit of the gift especially in the manifestation of *glossolalia* and gifts of physical, emotional and spiritual healing. The paradigm of Pentecost is interleaved with examples of testimony of contemporary experiences of the spirit's power in people's lives that suggest the possibility that these phenomena, such as 'glowing all over' and 'liquid heat' can be experienced today.³⁴ In addition to these, the experience and exercise of the gift of *glossolalia* is promoted as a means of finding an immediate rather than inferential experience of assurance and this is encouraged through testimony about its efficacy and instruction about how to get this gift from God.³⁵ The experience of gifts of healing and prayer for healing also form part of the Alpha course and reinforce the participant's expectation of immediacy in term of God's presence and power to heal. In contrast to this, *Journey Into Life* offers a modest level of expectancy expressed metaphorically in terms of food, air and exercise, in the form of instruction to read the Bible every day, prayer and time with God as well as exercise in the form of worship in church and witness in the world.³⁶

The Emmaus Journey into Faith

The Emmaus Course is built on the foundation of evangelism and discipleship as recorded in Luke 24.13-35 where Jesus accompanied his disciples and taught them along the way. Luke records that 'while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them',³⁷ and as he did so he 'expounded in all the scriptures the things concerning himself'.³⁸ The Emmaus course develops this idea in what it describes as a 'let us go together and see

³² Warren, p. 14.

³³ Gumbel, pp. 133-47.

³⁴ Ibid. p. 136.

³⁵ Ibid. p. 147.

³⁶ Warren, p. 15.

³⁷ Luke 24.15 King James Version

³⁸ Luke 24. 27

what God will do’³⁹ approach that puts evangelism in what it sees as the ‘right place’, in the Church rather than in what it describes as ‘bolt on’ courses’,⁴⁰ building on the notion of ‘belonging before believing’.⁴¹ Emmaus offers a relational and church based evangelistic nurture course that is aimed at non churchgoers and people in or on the fringe of the church who want more knowledge of ‘the intellectual basics of the Christian faith or what that faith can do in people’s lives’.⁴² Emmaus emphasises faith as a journey, and grounds this idea in a case study of a lady called Mary who brings a child for Baptism and through this is invited to an Emmaus course which through the strength of the relationship already made she feels drawn to participate in.⁴³ This relational ministry does not contradict the practice of evangelism represented in the *Journey Into Life* model developed in the context of Anglican Parish ministry, most notably Baptismal visitation. As noted in the research, *Journey Into Life* developed and employed a significant platform for its deployment particularly through youth ministry in what this study has identified as the evangelical ‘Argo’. Warren subsequently produced and published ‘follow on’ material in the form of two booklets, ‘*The Way Ahead*’ and ‘*Directions*’ that together performed a catechetical function similar to that of the Emmaus course.⁴⁴ Emmaus picks up and employs an important feature of evangelism that became apparent in the *Journey Into Life* research narratives. The *Journey Into Life* stories of Chester, Brown and King showed in different ways how their journey into faith was more complex and lengthy than the decision-based paradigm suggested by the *Journey Into Life* approach. Chester had been in the process of deconstructing her decision based *Journey Into Life* narrative and had been reconfiguring it on the

³⁹ Cottrell and others p. 1.

⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 3.

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 13. Davie, *A Persistent Paradox*, pp. 78-81. A play on Davie’s globally influential idea of ‘believing without belonging’. See Davie’s longitudinal critique of her own notion of believing without belonging after twenty years of use in a wide variety of social and religious studies as well as more popular uses. For its use in the sociology of religion see Abby Day, *Believing in Belonging: Belief and Social Identity in the Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁴² Cottrell and others p. 35.

⁴³ Ibid. p. 16.

⁴⁴ Warren, *Directions: Fourteen Bible Study Outlines on Basic Christianity*; Warren, *The Way Ahead: A Practical Guide to Christian Living*.

basis of a longer and more complex journey into faith. This had begun in childhood when she remembered that ‘as a child I’d sing to Jesus every night’⁴⁵ long before she ever encountered *Journey Into Life* and prayed the prayer. King and Brown’s narratives also showed a much more complex and lengthy journey into faith where *Journey Into Life* was part but not all of their story of coming to a faith commitment. Even within the legacy of *Journey Into Life* there was this duality of immediate ‘decisions’ alongside ‘journey’ narratives that can be seen to compliment rather than contradict one another with some people being able to provide specific dates and times for decisions made whilst for others there was no identifiable point of decision.⁴⁶

Christianity Explored

Christianity Explored advocates evangelism that seeks to enable people to come to ‘a clear understanding of what the Christian life entails before committing to it’.⁴⁷ The emphasis of the Christianity Explored course is on a cognitive approach that is clearly illustrated in the conclusion to the away day where the speaker is instructed to say, ‘I hope you have enjoyed the opportunity to think through the implications of the good news about Jesus’.⁴⁸ This ‘thinking through’ is important and it is a strength of the course that it appeals to the intellect and a thoughtful rather than just an emotional approach to the Christian faith. However, the downside in practice is the resultant complex presentation that is difficult to assemble⁴⁹ and reminiscent of the type of approach that *Journey Into Life* was originally designed to break away from. Warren’s criticism of the evangelistic literature that he had in 1963 was that whilst they ‘were brilliant books’ they were no good for a non-book culture.⁵⁰ As Warren went around his deeply working-class mining parish armed with Stott’s ‘Basic Christianity’ he said it ‘didn’t take me long to realise, mate, your barking up the wrong tree’.⁵¹ Warren

⁴⁵ Chester, Interview Transcript, p. 5.

⁴⁶ Booker and Ireland, pp. 36-7. Endorsing the ‘catechumenate approach’ of Emmaus.

⁴⁷ Tice and Cooper, p. 131.

⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 149.

⁴⁹ Booker and Ireland, p. 191.

⁵⁰ Warren, p. 29.

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 30.

said 'it was a brilliant book about a hundred and fifty pages but they were no good for the mining village'.⁵² He said that 'they were really for the sort of literate people' and he thought that in this context he was one of the first people to try to reach out to people who don't read.⁵³ *Christianity Explored* is the product of a particular educated middle class social environment that assumes a high level of literacy and education in its approach and that is fine for its intended audience, but not easy to translate into a culture that doesn't read or study. *Christianity Explored* and 'the courses' all adopt this middle class adult education model that *Journey Into Life* was trying to avoid in its presentation of Christianity.⁵⁴ *Journey Into Life* was aimed at people who inhabited a cultural milieu that the middle class evangelical 'Argo' was mostly out of touch with and for whom the idea of coming on a course was totally alien. Warren's presentation did not ask people to write or pray their own prayer, he gave them a concrete, step by step approach, giving a prayer to pray, as well as simple illustrations, heading and words that worked despite its perceived naiveté and apparent simplicity.⁵⁵ When contrasted with the huge amount of scaffolding in terms of often expensive and complex resources that surround the courses, *Journey Into Life* is refreshingly uncomplicated, simple and unashamed of its evangelical heritage.⁵⁶

The Legacy of *Journey Into Life* in Fresh Expressions of Church

Beyond the Fringe

In Warren's book '*Signposts*' he outlined his programme for evangelism and this publication provides an additional insight into the social context within which *Journey Into Life* was used.⁵⁷ Opportunities for outreach through visiting a new block of flats or a new estate are recognised but what is described as 'even more vital' is visiting people who come to church or who have some link.⁵⁸ These links

⁵² Warren, *Journey Into Life*, p. 29.

⁵³ Warren, Author Interview, p. 28.

⁵⁴ Booker and Ireland, p. 44. Emmaus is the only one of these courses that uses alternative learning styles.

⁵⁵ Scripture Union would only publish it as a children's book.

⁵⁶ *Christianity Explored* drops the classic evangelical metaphor of 'opening the door to Jesus' and 'asking him in'.

⁵⁷ Norman Warren, *Signposts: Preparing a Church for Evangelism* (London: The Church Pastoral Aid Society, 1974).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* p. 1.

are identified in the form of parents of Sunday School children or choirboys and families who come into contact with the church through baptisms, marriages and funerals.⁵⁹ Such links or in terms of the gift exchange theory of Mauss, these 'mechanisms of obligation'⁶⁰ were a feature of the post-war community life as the churches were linked both informally and formally through organisations such as the Scouts, Boys Brigade, other civic institutions and church schools. However, by the turn of the millennium these 'contacts' were far less prevalent and Moore's description of the decline of ministry to children in her church in Portsmouth would be representative of the changes that were taking place on a national level since *Journey Into Life* was written. Moore describes her rationale for *Messy Church* on the basis that 'there used to be an annual holiday club for children, but when that stopped there was only a small Thursday night children's group that could be seen as any sort of opportunity for children in the parish to encounter God'.⁶¹ Moore's 'fresh expression' of church was born out of the frustration of knowing that they had 'good premises, good leaders, some good ideas, but few children and families turning up on a Sunday'.⁶² This shrinkage in the 'mechanisms of obligation' and the sizable 'fringe' that had been an inherited part of church life was fast becoming extinct and the 'fresh expressions' movement was a response to this new situation. *Messy Church* intentionally positioned itself on the edge but not completely outside of the existing church structure. Moore credits Ward's theology of 'liquid church' as the inspiration for the name which she attributes to Ward's idea of a 'liquid church with fuzzy edges'.⁶³ Building on Bauman's distinction between solid and liquid modernity, Ward proposed the development of new 'liquid' expressions of church and this new thinking led to Moore creating what has become one of the leading, well-known and certainly the most widely imitated forms of fresh expressions of church.⁶⁴ In order to demonstrate the difference between the 'solid' evangelistic

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Mauss, pp. 6-12.

⁶¹ Moore, p. 10.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid. p. 14; Pete Ward, *Liquid Church* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002).

⁶⁴ Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*; Ward, *Liquid Church*, p. 16.

practices of the *Journey Into life* 'Argo' and the more 'liquid' approach of *Messy Church* it is easier to say what it is not. It is not a craft club or a course and neither is it a weekday replacement for the extinct Sunday School, rather it is a church and as such a free standing Christian congregation. With this understanding in place the missionary ecclesiology and evangelistic practices of *Messy Church* and *Journey Into Life* can now be compared.

Journey Into Life and The Messy Church

Messy Church confesses to be messy in every sense, both in its theology and practice of ministry, particularly when compared to the clear-cut and systematic approach to evangelism reflected in the theology and practices of the *Journey Into Life* paradigm. Moore sees *Messy Church* as an 'apt reflection of the way many of us journey messily towards God', and whilst acknowledging that there might be a road to Damascus' moments when 'we career in our spiritual Ferraris up the Autobahn to glory', for many the process is not that 'tidy'.⁶⁵ In terms of gathering a congregation *Messy Church* questions the drawing of clear-cut binaries between Christian and non-Christian, church member or outsider, on the basis of the example of Jesus, who Moore says spent most of his time outside the 'tidy religious centre of Jerusalem' in the 'messy fringes of Jewish society' among the 'demi-monde of disreputable women and dodgy dealers'.⁶⁶ Moore does not reject the idea of coming to a point where people can say 'for definite, Yup, I'm a Christian, with the same certainty we can say Yup I'm married',⁶⁷ however what she is taking seriously is the idea of a journey to faith that involves 'bits of belonging, a little believing, all swirling around in a life-changing primeval soup', while as she says 'the Spirit works in us to bring us nearer to Jesus in our many different ways'.⁶⁸ This is in stark contrast to the believing before belonging mind-set that is hard wired into the *Journey Into Life* approach to evangelism and church. In *Journey Into Life* the suggestion to 'join a

⁶⁵ Moore, p. 15.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid. pp. 15-16.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 16.

local church at once' and to 'never miss being with Christians in Church on Sunday'⁶⁹ demonstrates this 'solid Church' thinking that equates attendance at Church on Sunday with believing and faithfulness.⁷⁰ However in spite of *Journey Into Life's* solid church and modernist ecclesiology there is a shared evangelical ecclesiology with *Messy Church* in its missiology that is focussed on those outside the existing congregation, be they fringe, 'open de-churched' or 'non-churched' with no Church background.⁷¹ As demonstrated in this research the evangelicals of the *Journey Into Life* 'Argo' had a strong missionary imperative rooted in the Great Commission and this is shared in the missiological drive behind *Messy Church*. In its modernist context, the *Journey Into Life* evangelicals of the 'Argo' were 'working the fringe' through all sorts of entrepreneurial activities,⁷² whereas Moore and her *Messy Churches* have been taking the church out 'beyond the fringe' to what is identified in the gospels as 'the crowd'. Moore points out that within that 'crowd' will be people for whom *Messy Church* will have whetted people's appetites for more information about Christ and that a few will want to take their questions further through participation in the courses such as Alpha and Emmaus.⁷³

More Christology

As *Journey Into Life* moved towards the new millennium Warren made some important changes to the original text that recognised the new religious landscape of the approaching twenty-first century. Warren said that 1990 was the 'only time' that he had changed the words because he realised that with the change in culture 'people knew very little about Jesus Christ'.⁷⁴ He said 'what I did was that I shortened the first eight pages and that allowed me to add at least one or if not one and a half pages on who Jesus is, actually, on his person'.⁷⁵ This move towards a more comprehensive and explicit presentation of Christ marked

⁶⁹ Warren, p. 15.

⁷⁰ Ward, p. 17.

⁷¹ Cray and others, p. 37.

⁷² As explored in chapter 4

⁷³ Moore, p. 44.

⁷⁴ Warren, p. 18.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

a departure from the previously assumed knowledge of Christ and the salvation narrative of creation, fall, redemption and consummation that was characteristic of mid twentieth-century British culture. *Messy Church* offers a teaching syllabus that starts in the Old Testament with Abraham, developing the idea of God's family through key figures in the salvation story and thus preparing the ground for its presentation of Jesus Christ through the 'I am' sayings.⁷⁶ This shift towards a greater emphasis on the presentation of information about Jesus Christ in *Journey Into Life*, as well as the foregrounding of the person of Christ through the 'I am' sayings in *Messy Church*, recognises the way that evangelism is now taking place in a culture that has experienced much less access and exposure to information about the person of Christ. The emphasis on the work of Christ in *Journey Into life* was based on an assumed body of knowledge about the person of Christ which is increasingly absent in contemporary culture and this information gap offers both a challenge and an opportunity for evangelism. Warren's changes to the tract demonstrates that built into the heritage of *Journey Into Life* is the willingness to change and adapt the presentation of Christ to engage with social and cultural change. Whilst pneumatology has occupied a good deal of debate and activity within British evangelicalism over the *Journey Into Life* years, the stage lights are now being increasingly focussed on the person of Christ, both in terms of historical knowledge and as will be demonstrated in the following section, through existential encounters mediated through 'supernatural evangelism'.

The Legacy of *Journey Into Life* in Treasure Hunting Evangelism

Supernatural Evangelism

Dedmon describes his method of 'supernatural evangelism' as the 'ultimate treasure hunt' in which Christians seek out 'supernatural encounters' with people who they understand as having been prepared by God for 'a divine appointment'.⁷⁷ He makes it clear that this form of evangelism is 'not about arguing someone into confessing Christ' or 'coming up with the right answers to

⁷⁶ Moore, p. 105.

⁷⁷ Dedmon, pp. 20-21.

convince someone to agree with your particular doctrine'. Instead, it offers a radically alternative approach to evangelism by conceiving it as a treasure hunt that brings 'the Good News of the Kingdom through supernatural means and demonstrations of God's power and love through supernatural encounters'.⁷⁸ Dedmon builds his concept of treasure hunting on Jesus's parable of the 'lost coin' which he calls the treasure and identifying it in 'lost' people who are waiting to be discovered.⁷⁹ He describes them as:

Those who desperately and often secretly need a real encounter with God in order to meet the overwhelming needs of their lives and the unfulfilled desires of their hearts.⁸⁰

The technique involves a five-step process of preparation in the formation of a treasure hunting map that consists of categories for the clues that will enable the treasure hunters to find their treasure.⁸¹ Dedmon describes how these clues are uncovered through the use of a 'spiritual metal detector'⁸² in the form of 'words of knowledge' received in prayer by the treasure hunters prior to embarking on their hunt. These 'words of knowledge' refer to information that is understood as being transmitted by the Holy Spirit who enables the practitioner to 'simply know something about something or someone'.⁸³ These clues are then collated into the five categories of a location, a person's name, a person's appearance, a person's ailment or issue for prayer and anything unusual.⁸⁴ This treasure hunting method is illustrated through accounts of this practice starting with a description of a treasure hunt in Walmart armed only with the clues 'headache, blue shirt, Starbucks coffee, knee pain, hurt right arm, frozen foods, red hat, CD's and bucket'.⁸⁵ Following their clues the treasure hunters approached a boy in a blue shirt who was shopping with his mother and the team showed her their map, their clues and explained what they were doing. Reading the clues, the

⁷⁸ Ibid. p. 21.

⁷⁹ Luke 15.8-10

⁸⁰ Dedmon, p. 27.

⁸¹ Ibid. p. 70.

⁸² Ibid. p. 54.

⁸³ Ibid. p. 53.

⁸⁴ Ibid. pp. 70-71. See also Appendix 1

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 23.

mother indicated that the boy had been suffering from an unidentified disease that left him 'virtually crippled' by constant headaches. Dedmon described the woman as 'not a Christian' but she non-the-less welcomed their prayers, which were offered 'right there in the aisle' as the team 'invited God's presence' and 'laid hands on the little boy'. After a few minutes the boy began to feel much better and the team 'began to pray heaven's destiny over mom and son'. Dedmon recounted that by the end of the ten-minute encounter, 'we were all like family, hugging and rejoicing together', with the 'mom giving her phone number to a woman on the team asking if she could go to church'.⁸⁶ In a similar manner Dedmon described how the other clues led their team to specific people one of whom they met in the bucket aisle 'invited Jesus into her heart' and told them that it was the best day of her life.⁸⁷ This is what Dedmon calls 'supernatural evangelism' through 'supernatural encounters' with people who have been prepared by God for 'divine appointments' as guided by the Holy Spirit, in order to 'reveal the truth of Jesus Christ'.⁸⁸ He argues that 'what leads people to repentance is the kindness of God', mediated through Christians who heal the sick, 'prophesy the secrets of people's hearts', and through prayers that enable people to hear of their 'true destiny' thus 'setting people free to live a blessed life'.⁸⁹ This form of evangelism as proposed by Dedmon does at first sight appear to be a radical departure from the conservative evangelical approach represented in *Journey Into Life*, however further analysis reveals a more complex relationship between these two models.

Treasure Hunting Through the Lens of *Journey Into Life*

Analysis of this treasure hunting evangelism through the lens of *Journey Into life* identifies the similarities and differences within the theology and practice of the two models, showing the continuities and discontinuities between the two. The reformed evangelical missionary ecclesiology based on the 'Great Commission'

⁸⁶ Ibid. p. 25.

⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 27.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 20.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

identified in the theological analysis of *Journey Into Life*, is clearly in evidence in the missionary ecclesiology of these treasure hunting Christians. Dedmon identifies both his motivation as well as his vision for the scope for his evangelism with 'Jesus's whole mission' to seek and save the lost and to go and make disciples of all nations, pointing out the importance of reaching every social group.⁹⁰ This powerful motivational belief and its corresponding obligation to give that was identified in the practices and theology of the *Journey Into Life* participants is one that is shared in the contemporary practice of the treasure hunting evangelists. In addition to this shared missionary ecclesiology there is also an implicit common soteriology in penal substitutionary atonement as evidenced when Dedmon says that 'he bought each one of us with a price: the precious blood of Jesus'.⁹¹ This form of atonement is not denied by the treasure hunters but it is subordinated in evangelistic practice to a strident and dominant pneumatology that is in sharp contrast to the *Journey Into Life* approach that prioritises the presentation of a substitutionary soteriology. The presentation of *Journey Into Life's* pneumatology in its theology of union with Christ through adoption, as witnessed in both inferential and immediate assurance and embodied in the act of opening the door to Jesus through praying the prayer,⁹² looks very restrained when contrasted with the audaciously prevenient pneumatology of the treasure hunters. However, as revealed in the data from chapter six there was considerable evidence of spiritual phenomena in terms of epiphany and encounter with Jesus and the Spirit in the reception of *Journey Into Life*,⁹³ meaning these two apparently significantly different pneumatological approaches are not as far apart as they seem at first sight. The difference in these 'acute spiritual experiences' and 'quasi-sensory experiences'⁹⁴ reported by respondents in these two methods of evangelism related firstly to the sequencing of the presentation and, secondly, to the emphasis on healing and prophetic prayer. It is these elements of sequence, healing and prophetic prayer

⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 35 & 40.

⁹¹ Ibid. p. 35.

⁹² Chapter 6 The Spirit of The Gift.

⁹³ Chapter 6 Receiving the Spirit of The Gift.

⁹⁴ Chapter 9 Locating Evangelical Pneumatology.

that offer further insight into the continuities and changes introduced into the *Journey Into Life* model by the treasure hunting evangelists.

Sequencing, Healing and Prophetic Prayer

In the description of the artefact in chapter one, the sequencing of the information in *Journey Into Life* was outlined demonstrating the flow of ideas from the questions at the beginning to the instructions for the way ahead at the end. This sequence is in evidence in the treasure hunting model with questions for engagement in the form of 'clues' and people taking phone numbers and contact details at the end so that the respondents can be linked in with a Christian congregation. What is different in the treasure hunting from the *Journey Into Life* approach is that the spirit of the gift is brought forward in the sequence and placed 'up front' in the process of evangelism. Within this shift of sequencing two pneumatological elements in the form of prophecy and healing are brought to the front end 'contact' phase of the engagement with the respondents. In terms of the *Journey Into Life* sequence from the research data, respondents to the treasure hunt are praying it before reading it and the opening of the door motif from Revelation 3.16 is accelerated and promoted ahead of the cognitive process of reading it. This 'try before you buy' approach 'front loads' the evangelistic exchange with specific personal information derived from the practice of prophetic prayer through 'words of knowledge'. Dedmon is not ashamed of this, indeed he says that although some people, like Billy Graham:

Are masterful at walking a crowd through the logical steps toward the launch pad of faith, most people do not come into the Kingdom through a well-developed argument, but through an encounter.⁹⁵

He uses the example of one of his team who saw an angel holding a banner that read 'encounter' over a woman in a car park. Encouraged by this, the team member felt impelled to tell the woman that 'Jesus had recently visited her in her dreams', and this led to a conversation that resulted in her saying 'I want to

⁹⁵ Dedmon, p. 48.

know Jesus the way that you know Jesus'.⁹⁶ This prioritising of the prophetic in the sequencing of evangelism has a particular focus in this model on healing, which is something that is completely absent from the *Journey Into Life* model. Dedmon also did not initially pray for the sick, but had subsequently come to an understanding that the healing ministry is 'simply releasing the presence of Christ that is residing within us'.⁹⁷ Following this shift in his thinking he had been bringing healing prayer to the evangelistic process by taking it outside the context of church meetings and into the marketplace in treasure hunting evangelism. Dedmon justifies his belief in his authority to heal in his theology of adoption that he takes further than the *Journey Into Life* evangelicals by arguing that it is through a realisation of Christian identity as children of God that Christians gain the authority and confidence to release healing.⁹⁸ The evangelistic healing practiced by Dedmon and his team is not an indiscriminate approach that prays for anyone who is sick, rather it is targeted through prophetic 'clues' towards those who they identify as having been prepared by God for a divine appointment that will bring healing, but also the possibility of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Clues such as blue jeans, post office, blue truck, knee problem, James, black man, glasses and salvation led the team to find a construction worker called James who was in agonising knee pain caused by arthritis. Dedmon and the team 'prayed a simple prayer, and in a matter of moments, the man was completely healed' and this was followed by him 'leading James to Christ' in the parking lot, next to a blue mail box.⁹⁹ In addition to praying the prayer for healing and praying the prayer for salvation, Dedmon and his team also pray prayers in their encounters that they describe as 'calling out the gold'.¹⁰⁰ The purpose of these prophetic prayers is to 'call out the hidden glory, the missing identity, and the unfulfilled destiny' in a person's life and it is the prophetic prayer that 'finds the gold and calls it out'.¹⁰¹ He recounts the

⁹⁶ Ibid. pp. 49-50.

⁹⁷ Ibid. p. 132.

⁹⁸ Ibid. pp. 135-6.

⁹⁹ Ibid. pp. 45-46.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. p. 146.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. p. 147.

response of the man who took their words seriously and wrote everything down particularly the strategies that were given for making his business grow.¹⁰² This pneumatological emphasis on the prophetic gift and healing gives this treasure hunting evangelism a confidence and boldness that more than matches the ‘frontline evangelism’¹⁰³ of the evangelical Argo as pioneered by Warren, who was ‘giving it’ out through *Journey Into Life* in two working-class mining communities from the fringe of the 1960s Anglican church.

The Gift of Evangelism

Hurst’s interview gave a unique insight into Warren’s evangelistic practice that corresponds with the Treasure Hunters attitude and confidence in the dynamic movement of the Holy Spirit in the act of evangelism. Hurst was the only participant in the research who had worked with Warren in the practice of evangelism through *Journey Into Life* and he recalled the difference with Warren was that he ‘was passionate that this stuff really works,’ and that through his evangelism ‘you could see people’s lives really changed’. Hurst was challenged by Warren’s positive attitude and confidence that ‘if you explain the gospel to them you will see them becoming Christians’. The senior minister of the church where Warren was helping at that time said ‘I don’t know what it is about him, he is not necessarily all that interesting but when he’s with people they come to faith, he’s got a gift of evangelism’.¹⁰⁴ He said that ‘Warren goes to people’s homes and people become Christians’.¹⁰⁵ Hurst endorsed this saying of Warren that *Journey Into Life* is Warren’s ‘complete understanding of everything you have to do to understand the Christian faith, he totally believed in it’.¹⁰⁶ The gift of evangelism expressed in Warren and in the Treasure Hunters is displayed in a confidence that God will step in if the giver steps out in faith. Clements described this confidence in his initial sharing of what he later regarded as ‘utterly [un] self-

¹⁰² Ibid. p. 152. There was no record of any ‘follow up’ or indication if the business improved following this intervention.

¹⁰³ Chapter 4 Frontline Evangelism.

¹⁰⁴ Hurst, p. 10.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 11.

conscious pre-theoretical evangelism' amongst his friendship group and how without him having 'any sense that you have to do this kind of thing', they spontaneously became Christians through him.¹⁰⁷ Whereas the *Journey Into Life* and Treasure Hunting models of evangelism may express differing understandings of revelation¹⁰⁸ there is, nonetheless, a common sense of simplicity and an almost naïve trust in the efficacy of the gift exchange process. As Mauss identified, the spirit of the gift is more than the object itself and the gift of evangelism in these models is not just in the gift or in the giver, but in the spirit, who in this case is identified as the Holy Spirit who is understood to be active through the whole encounter with the giver and the gift. This dynamic relationship between the gift, the gifted, the giver, and the spirit of the gift is explored further in the next chapter as the essential elements behind *Journey Into Life's* impact on evangelical identity are synthesised and defined.

¹⁰⁷ Clements, p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ The former rational/cognitive, the latter supernatural/experiential.

Chapter Eleven – Research Findings

Encapsulated Elements

The artefact and article of faith that is *Journey Into Life* has provided this research with a powerful and unique lens for seeing into the social and theological complexity of evangelical identity in the United Kingdom between 1963 and 1989. By shining light through the lens of *Journey Into Life* this material culture research has brought into sharp focus the theology and practice of evangelism amongst twentieth-century evangelicals, revealing in detail and depth, the cultural and theological identity of this evangelical 'Argo'. In this chapter the findings from the interview data, analysis of core research themes, theological mapping and the examination of the legacy of *Journey Into Life* are projected back through the lens of the artefact to reveal the full spectrum of colours that have combined to constitute late twentieth-century evangelical identity. This identity is displayed in the form of eight key elements of its theology and practice of evangelism, central to its formation and development. These elements have been distilled into a series of key words that encapsulate each element of the essential nature of *Journey Into life* to reveal precisely what this object of faith is. Taken together these eight key words not only provide a concise identification of what this article of faith is and how it worked, but they also represent the unique discoveries in both evangelism and evangelicalism that have emerged from this material culture and theological analysis of the gifting and exchange of this defining artefact of evangelical faith. The eight key words that encapsulate the essential elements of *Journey Into Life* are as follows.

Eight Essential Elements of *Journey Into life*

1. Iconographic

In the examination of the 'Argo' data as constituted in the analysis of the core research theme 'given it' there was a noticeable accumulation of evidence that

showed *Journey Into Life* functioning as a badge or marker of a developing and strengthening evangelical identity. Research participants from the 1970s and 1980s disclosed the way that this booklet was almost always present and visible on board the evangelical 'Argo', on its camps, holidays and house parties as well as in its churches. It was instantly and immediately recognised by participants, even after thirty years and as demonstrated from the data analysis in chapter seven it provided a means of identifying both corporately and individually with the growing evangelical movement of the 1970s and 1980s. As indicated in the data, even mention of the word 'road sign' tract brought instant and nostalgic recognition with participants expressing a surprising level of fondness for it and as observed, moving *Journey Into Life* close to the category of evangelical relic.¹ The importance and power of the cover of the tract cannot be overstated with the data having shown how the road sign graphic and the title combined to give *Journey Into life* a unique and immediately recognisable identity.² The diverging green and white road sign graphic signified and successfully communicated choice. Remarkably the data showed how this strong sense of choice took place even before the tract was opened. Respondents reported how they were interacting and engaging with its message even through the cover with one participant recalling how he found himself repeatedly 'drawn to it'. This Augustinian call to 'pick up and read' was not the result of any slick or glossy marketing, indeed to the contrary, as the tract was printed on coarse paper with a no nonsense and down to earth non-glossy finish. Respondents spoke of the way that they were 'so' attracted to it and how this simple object and artefact became such a powerful 'object of desire'.³ The research showed how the booklet's cover had an inherent ability to stick in the minds of those who saw it. In a manner reminiscent of a 1960s Che Guevara or Hendrix T shirt, the road sign graphic had a form of indelibility, meaning that contact with the booklet, perhaps even just a glance, assumed an almost contagious quality. Both the title and the cover were shown in the data to have been communicating at a deep

¹ See chapter 7 Evangelical Protestant Relics and Iconic Practices of Belief.

² The publishers of the contemporary edition have abandoned any reference to the original signature road sign graphic.

³ See chapter 5 The Decision to Pick Up and Read

level with the respondents.⁴ Prior to the research, assumptions were that the title *Journey Into Life* was the result of a well-planned and deeply considered editorial decision, however it became clear in the author interview that the title was not the fruit of focus groups or market research, but instead was the product of an inspired decision.⁵ Although almost an afterthought, the title '*Journey Into Life*' became a significant part of the tracts appeal and overall reach both in and beyond the boundaries of the evangelical 'Argo'.⁶ Contextually this was the era of adventurous young people taking the 'magic bus' overland to India on a *journey* of self-discovery and spiritual searching which meant that this title connected with the *zeitgeist* of the 1960s and 1970s in a way the author could never have imagined when it first came to mind.

2. Simple

Warren credits the 'red top' tabloid newspapers as the inspiration for the formatting of *Journey Into Life* using a picture, a caption with a small amount of information and then some further text if the reader wanted more.⁷ Importantly Warren recognised that the people with whom he was seeking to communicate were 'bright' and literate but they just did not read. Warren pioneered this tabloid format in what he described as his attempt to 'try to reach out to the really working-class people who don't normally read'.⁸ The surprising discovery in the interview data was the way that this simple tabloid approach not only communicated with its intended audience in the mining community of Bedworth, but also functioned in an unforeseen and powerful way amongst a very different audience. Cambridge undergraduate Clements, who had what he described as a pre-existing 'literacy' about Christianity, said that the text of *Journey Into Life* offered him a 'simple, very linear, logical and rational approach' that gave him a new sense of 'clarity'.⁹ Likewise King, who later became a

⁴ See chapter 5 Reading the Wrapper. Some of whom reported making an initial response just by looking at the green and white road signs cover.

⁵ See chapter 5 A Pictorial Guide

⁶ A theme explored extensively in chapter 7 Iconography Aboard the Evangelical Argo

⁷ See chapter 5 The Tabloid Tract

⁸ Warren, p. 28.

⁹ Clements, p. 14.

professional academic, said that *Journey Into Life* provided him with his first systematic theology because it was the first time that he had seen 'doctrine articulated on the page'.¹⁰ The simplicity of *Journey Into Life* communicated effectively with this broad spectrum of audiences and provided an explanation of Christian faith that they could 'make sense'¹¹ of, as well as offering a conceptual framework that brought together their pre-existing understanding of Christianity. This simplicity and clarity of the presentation in *Journey Into Life* was further enhanced by Warren's pioneering use of twenty-six hand drawn illustrations.¹²

3. Visual

Warren's employment of illustrations was ground-breaking in 1963, and it flowed from his context in the mining community of Bedworth where he quickly realised the necessity, importance and potential of popular communication through visual culture and visual media. In 1963 when Warren took *Journey Into Life* to major Christian publishers he met with strong resistance, as the idea of putting illustrations in an adult orientated publication was looked down upon.¹³ However, as demonstrated in the interview data, Warren's use of visual culture brought a new level of clarity and an increased effectiveness in the communication of his message. The tabloid style captions provided an accessible and familiar framework for the permeating pictures that were simple but profoundly memorable, as evidenced in the data with responders talking at length about the significant impression individual illustrations had made upon them over thirty-five years ago. The simplicity of the pictures and the simplicity of the text were a recurring feature of the interview narratives and this combination provided a particularly effective means of communication amongst its earliest recipients in the two mining communities where the author was working.

¹⁰ King, p. 7.

¹¹ Chester, p. 4.

¹² See chapter 1 Description of the Tract *Journey Into Life*

¹³ See chapter 5 Pictures and Captions in Print. The only way that Warren could get *Journey Into life* printed was to self-publish

One interviewee went so far as to say that ‘the diagrams do it all’ and that ‘you can almost do without the text’.¹⁴ For him it was the pictures that made a ‘huge amount of sense’ and at interview he could recall the specific pictures and the point they were conveying. He specifically recalled the simple line drawing of a person separated by a dark cloud with the word ‘sin’ written on it, blocking the sunlight of God, and then the second almost identical image with the person trying to push the cloud of ‘sin’ away. What was particularly striking was the way that these two images had not only stayed with the recipient, but also the level of detail and the subtleties that he had picked up through looking at and meditating upon these images. Not only had he observed subtle differences, such as the way the first figure was walking with his face down under the weight of the cloud, whilst the second figure was illustrated with arms raised, but his subsequent theological reflection had given him an understanding that he could not do anything about it himself and needed Jesus to remove the barrier.¹⁵ This experience of understanding about the separation caused by sin coming through the pictures was endorsed by another participant who said that she ‘had never understood that’ and ‘it all just sort of clicked’.¹⁶ One participant who was also impacted by the cloud illustration said that the pictures ‘permeated deep’ into him and ‘made a lot of sense’ to him.¹⁷ The interview data showed how these simple illustrations of the cloud, the green house, the dripping fountain pen, the pass mark, the coins and the robot had made a lifelong and powerful impression upon the participants.¹⁸ It was the interplay between these simple, permeating but memorable pictures and the text that brought the total message of *Journey Into Life* into meaning. The data showed that both these pictures and the words were important in bringing the overall text into meaning and, significantly, one participant said that he was not a visual person and that for him ‘it was the words’.¹⁹ Contemporary versions of *Journey Into Life* retain the words but

¹⁴ May, p. 12.

¹⁵ Ibid. pp. 1-2. See also chapter 5 Making Sense of the Cloud

¹⁶ Chester, p. 4.

¹⁷ Wells, p. 2. See also chapter 6 Permeating Pictures

¹⁸ See chapter 1 Description of the Tract

¹⁹ Dench, p. 9. See also chapter 5 Conceptualizing Faith Through Words

substitute the illustrations with photos that are aesthetically more sophisticated but lack the depth of theological meaning conveyed in the illustrations used between 1963 and 1989.²⁰

4. Relational

The interview data from the research sample endorsed the notion that the gifting of *Journey Into Life* had been deeply rooted in the relational ministry of the evangelical 'Argo' rather than through indiscriminate and less personal tract distribution practices. The research data that produced the theme 'given it' showed the importance that the evangelical 'Argo' placed on the development of its extensive relational structure in the presentation and gifting of *Journey Into Life*.²¹ The narratives of encounter revealed that the evangelical camps, house parties, young person's fellowship groups and Christian Unions were seminal in the evangelical faith reception and replication process. Powerful mechanisms of obligation were identified in the data and whilst there was no evidence of anyone being forced to accept the gift, there was evidence within the data of a significant obligation to partake.²² Ceremonies of transfer were found to be diverse rather than uniform with relational exchange through peer group and mentoring relationships being the primary mechanism. The spread of *Journey Into Life* went hand in hand with the democratisation and expansion of the growing network of camps and house parties based on the early Varsity and Public Schools camps of which Warren was a graduate. This evangelical sub-culture also employed the developing trends in popular music including the creation of a unique genre of choruses, followed later by music-based evangelistic missions to provide a new additional context for ceremonies of exchange through the presentation and gifting of *Journey Into Life*.²³ Analysis of the courses in chapter ten showed how this relational approach, as developed by

²⁰ Current edition published by David C Cook Publications Colorado Springs replaces the original illustrations with a series of photos. Norman Warren, *Journey into Life*, 4th edn (Colorado Springs: David C Cook).

²¹ See chapter 4 for full discussion of this theme

²² See chapter 4 Mechanisms of Obligation

²³ See chapter 4 Ceremonies of Transfer in Popular Music

the evangelical 'Argo' was subsequently expanded and adopted even outside evangelicalism with significant levels of success as part of the ceremony of transfer in the *Alpha*, *Emmaus* and *Christianity Explored* courses.

However, the *Journey Into Life* relational paradigm in the gift exchange process as adopted by the courses, found itself being challenged within this research when contrasted with the contemporary evangelistic practice of the treasure hunting evangelists whose relational platform was built entirely on prophetic words leading to prophetic evangelistic encounters. In their practice of evangelism, the treasure hunters directly challenged Millbank's assertion that 'without a primary relationality, there can be no gift-exchange'.²⁴ Their high risk and spontaneous dynamic approach to evangelism challenged the dominant notion and model of relational ministry in contemporary evangelism, by offering a mechanism of exchange that has no pre-existing relational platform. The energy and dynamism of the evangelist was directed away from the extended development of 'primary relationality' and placed instead on taking the gift out into the market place to engage directly with people with whom they have never met before. Surprisingly, the author's data revealed that in the decade of evangelism and following time spent in Africa with indigenous evangelists, Warren's vision for direct evangelism was renewed with the effect that he developed courses directed at training and empowering evangelists to know and use *Journey Into Life* so that they could engage in direct evangelism through visiting homes and talking with people on the streets. *Journey Into Life* was not only used in the context of relational exchange but also given to people with whom there was no prior relationship. The contemporary practice of the treasure hunters reinforced this idea of direct evangelism without an established relational base and this was endorsed by one of the research participants who worked as an evangelism trainer. He presented this point powerfully as follows:

I say to them do you know the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch and everyone said yes? Well you know Philip jumps up on the chariot and reads Isaiah and he helps the eunuch and they come across some water and the eunuch says, look here it is why can't I be baptized? Philip says,

²⁴ See chapter 4 Disruptive Narratives in The Churches Gifting. And Milbank, p. 124.

great idea but hold on next September there's an Alpha course starting, why don't you wait [un]till then? The eunuch says no I want to become a Christian now and Philip says okay in a few months' time we've got a Christianity Explored course, and the eunuch says, no I want to become a Christian now.²⁵

This direct and immediate approach also carries a significant history in evangelicalism expressed through the public and private proclamation of the gospel outside of authorised buildings or meetings and with no pre-existing relational framework.²⁶ The motivational energy and excitement expressed in the treasure hunter's accounts of their direct evangelistic practice echoed Warren's passion and contagious enthusiasm for direct evangelism expressed in his *Journey Into Life* narrative, providing an important corrective to an exclusive emphasis on relational evangelism at the expense of immediate and direct approaches.

5. Soteriological

Journey Into Life offers a clear and concise presentation of the classic evangelical doctrine of atonement identified in its theological mapping as propitiation through substitution.²⁷ The narrative research from *Journey Into Life* demonstrates how this powerful marker of evangelical theological identity has continued to be transmitted in popular form through this medium of the evangelistic tract. The data showed how *Journey Into Life* became a carrier for this particular theology, functioning as a marker of evangelical theological identity and playing a central role in the propagation of this normative evangelical belief. The research also showed how *Journey Into Life* functioned as an article of faith in the transmission of this particular evangelical soteriology being deployed internally a means of catechesis for this doctrine as well as externally as it was spread evangelistically from the evangelical 'Argo'. The data

²⁵ Ford, pp. 7-8.

²⁶ Exemplified historically in evangelicalism's most famous evangelists John Wesley and George Whitefield who when excluded from the churches took to the fields and town market squares. An idea of Whitefield's initially received by Wesley as 'a mad notion'. John Pollock, *George Whitefield and the Great Awakening* (Tring: Lion Publishing, 1972), pp. 73-83.

²⁷ See chapter 9 Propitiation, Expiation and Exclusion

showed how the repeated process of sharing this particular soteriology had reinforced and etched this penal and substitutionary theory of the atonement deep into the psyche of these young evangelicals. The interview data revealed the high degree of loyalty to this soteriology that had remained to a greater or lesser degree in the theology of those in the sample.²⁸ The data that provided the theme of ‘holding onto’ it showed the way that this understanding of the atonement presented in *Journey Into Life* acted as a creedal article of faith that was drawn on by these evangelicals in times of doubt and uncertainty. This research found no evidence of any evangelical tract that offered an alternative soteriological model other than this penal and substitutionary model. It remains a powerful theological marker of evangelical belief, doctrine and identity whose primary host for reproduction, alongside homiletics, is the simple tract of which *Journey Into Life* is a primary and important example.

6. Christocentric

The narratives of encounter highlighted an important difference in emphasis between contemporary evangelistic practice and that of *Journey Into Life*. In both the tract itself and the narratives of encounter, the focus of the evangelistic message was centred not on receiving the Spirit but on asking Jesus to come in and live in ‘your heart and mind’. Central to this was the Biblical text of Revelation 3.20 which says: ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him’. This was further signposted in the *Journey Into Life* rubric explaining that,

Jesus Christ waits outside the door of your life [...] you become a true Christian when you open your life to Jesus Christ and let him come in to live in your heart and life.

This was augmented by an encouragement to ‘accept Jesus Christ into your life to be...your friend to guide and be with you’. In the original text the word ‘friend’ is capitalised for emphasis,²⁹ highlighting the prioritisation of the offer of

²⁸ See chapter 9 Evangelical Soteriology in Practice

²⁹ As are the words Lord and Saviour.

friendship with Jesus in the practice of evangelism from the evangelical 'Argo'. As demonstrated in chapter nine, reception of the Spirit is understood theologically in this reformed tradition as union with Christ.³⁰ The spiritual experiences associated with opening the door to friendship with Christ, as reported in chapter nine show that there was no distinction made between the experience of reception of Christ as friend and the reception of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, as evidenced in the narrative of encounter they were understood as the same thing. Wood's graphic account of opening the door to Jesus included a significant pneumatological element including a description of the experience of glossolalia that would normally be associated with a Pentecostal theology of a second blessing or baptism in the Holy Spirit. Chester's experience also showed this close identification of her experience of the Spirit as mediating the presence of Jesus to her. Her narrative revealed how when sitting alone in her bedroom reading *Journey Into Life* she 'really felt Jesus was there'.³¹ Paradoxically the absence of explicit teaching about the Holy Spirit in *Journey Into Life* did not preclude these participants from experiencing the Spirit as they opened the door to Jesus.

The use of this language of friendship with Jesus in *Journey Into Life* had the advantage that it was very clear that what was being offered in the tract was Jesus Christ. In the Christ-centred evangelism of *Journey Into Life* it was very clear what was on offer in the presentation of its message was friendship with Jesus as a popular expression of the theology of union with Christ. In a manner, reminiscent of a clear and functional television advert, *Journey Into Life* offers Christ to the reader in a direct and unambiguous manner. The subjective-life experience in its reception is firmly tied to Jesus Christ and there is no ambiguity in *Journey Into Life's* identification of spiritual experience and spirituality as being Christ-centred. This is in stark contrast to the ambiguous and liquid subjective-life spirituality that has been taking place in 'the spiritual marketplace' of 'holism, New Age, mind-body-spirit, yoga, *feng shui*, *chi* and *chakra*'.³² This focus

³⁰ See chapter 9 Union with Christ in Evangelical Theology

³¹ See chapter 6 Jesus Comes In and Chester, pp. 5-7.

³² Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion Is Giving Way to Spirituality* (New Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), p. 1.

of *Journey Into Life* on Jesus' exclusive and unique claims, also make it today a much more challenging and controversial piece of literature in the context of the multi-faith, multi-cultural and pluralist religious and spiritual landscape of contemporary Britain.³³ *Journey Into Life* foregrounds and spotlights Jesus in an unequivocal way that could seem quite shocking to a contemporary reader and perhaps this indicates how evangelism has become reticent and constrained in its presentation of Jesus in the spiritual marketplace today. This retrieval of *Journey Into Life* is in part a reminder to evangelicals that what is being offered in Christ is a unique friendship and fellowship with God.

7. Decisional

Warren and his generation were significantly impacted by the Billy Graham 'crusades' of 1954-5. In his interview Warren recalled how he 'went up to Cambridge straight into the Billy Graham Missions', which he described as a 'terrific time' where he was 'tremendously built up and encouraged by the simple preaching and teaching the Gospel'.³⁴ Bebbington also observed how the Harringay meetings not only attracted huge numbers but had an 'enormous knock-on effect' particularly in the shape of a 'quickening' of Church life.³⁵ These 'crusades' offered a model of evangelism where the presentation of the message culminated in a call for a 'decision' for Christ.³⁶ Warren's adoption of this decision-based approach was analysed in this research, particularly with reference to the act of praying the prayer where it was suggested in the following rubric:

Think of Jesus Christ knocking now, asking to come into your life. You want him to come into your life or perhaps you want to make sure he has come into your life. It might help you to say this prayer, phrase by phrase, quietly, thoughtfully, thinking carefully what you are saying, and what you are doing.³⁷

³³ Taylor, pp. 139-63. Immigration and the new religious pluralism.

³⁴ Warren, p. 5.

³⁵ Bebbington, pp. 258-59. In the 1954 crusade 80,500 people attended in the first week.

³⁶ Such was the importance of this in Graham's ministry that he even named his global publication 'Decision Magazine'.

³⁷ Warren, p. 13.

This was a step further on from the usual practice of evangelism within the evangelical 'Argo' at the time, where potential Christians were encouraged to 'pause and consider thoughtfully its implications', due to the perceived danger of being 'swept into his allegiance by irresponsible emotion'.³⁸ Warren's approach was not as forceful as Graham's, but as evidenced in the interview data, it did enable people to decide and act on that decision through the activity of prayer. This decision-making process is an integral part of commitment with the prayer functioning as a 'commitment ritual'.³⁹ The interviews showed that these commitment rituals were often incorporated into the evangelistic events hosted by the 'Argo'. Herne attended a Dave Pope concert where there was an 'epilogue' comprising of a short 'talk' that included an appeal for a decision followed by a prayer. This contrasted with the fresh expressions evangelistic paradigm presented in chapter ten where, for example, in the 'Messy Church' the emphasis is on belonging before believing rather than believing to belong and therefore in their practice there is no obvious move towards a decision, at least not in such an intentional way. All but one of the participants in this research encountered *Journey Into Life* in their formative years between the ages of eleven and twenty. Even though some took longer than others to respond, this was a specific time in their lives when they were being presented with some significant life choices and the data showed that for some this culminated in a crisis decision whereas for others it was part of a long-term process.

8. Motivational

This research showed that a powerful motivational mechanism was at play in the gifting of *Journey Into Life* through the evangelical 'Argo'. Examination of the 'Argo' revealed a high level of motivation around this practice of gifting *Journey Into Life*, and this motivational energy was identified as the dynamic force that propelled the 'Argo' into action. The evangelical activism, intrinsic to Bebbington's thesis, was seen to have deep roots and drives in the purposeful

³⁸ Stott, p. 13.

³⁹ Rambo, pp. 125-28.

handing on of the *Journey Into Life* gospel, with a great deal of the evangelical ecclesial system being revealed as revolving and spinning around this gift exchange practice. Just as Malinowski and Mauss identified powerful motivational forces in the *myths* of the Trobriand Islanders, so this research identified the powerful motivational drive of these evangelical Argonauts in the beliefs and theology of the gift exchange practices of the 'Argo'. As demonstrated in chapter nine the prioritisation of the Great Commission in Matthew 28.19-20 provided these evangelicals with a powerful motivational theology that propelled them to hand it on even in times of existential uncertainty, tension and doubt.⁴⁰ The data revealed that these powerful motivational beliefs were deeply ingrained by established mechanisms of exchange through early socialisation and inculturation into the evangelical 'Argo'. Hurst recalled that at his summer camp the whole thing was set up and indeed led up to the handing on of this gift. From this perspective, it becomes difficult to imagine an evangelicalism evacuated of this practice and without this powerful gospel imperative. Missiologist Robert J. Schreiter makes an observation that has some correspondence with this when he describes the example of the practices of head hunters. Schreiter observed that:

The taking of the heads of one's enemies in battle provided much of the bonding symbolism among the Asmat people of Irian Jaya. When this was forbidden, the culture disintegrated rapidly.⁴¹

Even in those who were not using the *Journey Into Life* paradigm the motivation to give was still strong and continued to be expressed in the pioneering and development of new ways of contextual evangelism. Evangelical culture and ministry as represented in the research sample was identified in this study as still being closely bound to this practice, not of head hunting, but of gifting and exchanging the gospel of Christ that these young evangelicals had first encountered through reception of *Journey Into Life*.

⁴⁰ See chapter 8 Doubts and the Decay of the Idea

⁴¹ Schreiter, p. 14.

Summary

These eight key elements as distilled into key words each encapsulate the essential nature of *Journey Into life*. Taken together, not only do they provide a concise identification of what this article of faith is and how it worked, but they also represent the unique discoveries in both evangelism and evangelicalism that have emerged from this material culture and theological analysis of the gifting and exchange of this defining artefact of evangelical faith. In the final chapter these key findings are brought together with the theology of gift and grace to show how *Journey Into Life* worked as a material artefact in the development of late twentieth-century evangelical faith and faith identity in the United Kingdom, as well as drawing out the implications of these findings, particularly in terms of the future of evangelical identity and the contemporary practice of evangelism, along with suggestions for areas of further research.

Chapter Twelve – Conclusion: The Gift of *Journey Into Life*

Gift and Grace in *Journey Into Life*

This research has offered empirical evidence in support of its thesis that the practice of giving and receiving evangelistic tracts, particularly in the form of the booklet *Journey Into Life*, contributed to the development of British evangelical identity in the United Kingdom between 1963 and 1989. The life narratives of the research interviewees revealed how the gift of *Journey Into Life* had functioned theologically and practically in a demonstration of grace, as it was mediated through this iconic article of faith. This conclusion draws together the theological and practical elements of these research findings in two ways. Firstly, through the taxonomy of Barclay's six perfections of grace it offers a concise practical theology of grace mediation in the Christ-gift *Journey Into Life*. Secondly, this conclusion provides an explanation of how *Journey Into Life* 'worked' as the Christ-gift in its transmission of grace through four significant elements disclosed in its history of effects. This thesis concludes by looking to the future, the future of *Journey Into Life* and the future of the tract in a digital age.

The Gift

As Barclay points out 'if it is well grounded, mission drives us back again and again to the gift'.¹ Rooted in Mauss's anthropology of the gift,² as well as extensive research into the shifting interpretations of the theology of grace in New Testament studies, Barclay's work provides a concise and contemporary theological framework for drawing together the practical and theological findings about grace and the gift in *Journey Into Life*. Barclay highlights the way that the New Testament speaks about Christ with the language of the gift³ and points

¹ John Barclay, *Paul and the Subversive Power of Grace* (Cambridge: Grove Books Ltd, 2016), p. 23.

² Mauss, *The Gift*, pp. 1-81. See also chapter 4.

³ Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, p. 1.

out how 'the language of gift and grace has become central to the Christian theological tradition'.⁴ In his work in the 'new perspective' on Paul, Barclay proposes that grace 'is a multi-faceted concept best approached through the category of the gift'.⁵ Significantly this category of the gift in the study of *Journey Into Life* has demonstrated how, at the level of practice, the theology of the 'Christ-gift'⁶ became embodied in the faith identity of this particular group of evangelicals. Central to Barclay's methodology and thesis is his identification of what he calls the 'six perfections of grace'⁷ that provide a conceptual framework for the analysis of different theologies of grace. Taken together they offer an effective mechanism for drawing together the practical theology of grace expressed in and through the gift object and artefact of faith that is *Journey Into Life*.⁸

Gift and Grace

Barclay identifies his six perfections of grace as superabundance, singularity, priority, incongruity, efficacy, and non-circularity. Superabundance means extravagance, excess and scale.⁹ Singularity 'shifts attention away from the gift to the giver', and specifically to 'the spirit in which the gift is given'.¹⁰ The emphasis here is on the motivation and 'nothing-but-benevolence of the giver'.¹¹ The third perfection he calls priority, which has as its focus the 'perfect' timing of the gift which always takes place 'prior to the initiative of the recipient'.¹² It is both 'spontaneous in its generosity' and 'signals the superiority of the giver',¹³ being sometimes expressed in terms of prevenience or predestination. Incongruity means that the gift is given 'without regard to the worth of the

⁴ Ibid. p. 1.

⁵ Ibid. p. 6.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid. p. 70

⁸ Indeed it is important to reiterate that *Journey Into Life* is not just an artefact, it is a theological artefact, and therefore the study of this object is theological all the way through.

⁹ Ibid. p. 70. Romans 5.12-21 & 2 Corinthians 9.8,11. In support of this Barclay points to the language of excess and superabundance in Philo and the letters of Paul

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 71.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid. p. 72.

recipient'.¹⁴ The fifth perfection of gift and grace is defined as efficacy by which Barclay means that the gift fully achieves everything that it was designed to do. The sixth perfection is defined as the gift's non-circularity by which he means that it one-way only. This carries the modern idea of the 'pure gift' which is given without any expectation or obligation to give in return.¹⁵ It is this taxonomy of gift and grace that provides the framework of analysis in drawing together the practical theology of grace in the gift and gifting of *Journey Into Life*.

Perfections of Grace in *Journey Into Life*

Journey Into Life demonstrates a practical theology of grace in the practice in evangelism. This is what grace looked like in the lives of these evangelicals as it was expressed in their practice of giving and receiving the Christ-gift *Journey Into Life*. In Barclay's taxonomy the operation of grace was identified in the superabundance of the gift. This notion of superabundance goes to the heart of traditional practices of tract distribution that draw on a nineteenth-century historical mythology surrounding the power of these 'silent witnesses for Jesus'.¹⁶ Morgan identifies this superabundance in the imagery of the American Tract Society Membership Certificates that 'visualise the ideology of Evangelical print' with a printing press 'radiating light' and spewing out vast quantities of 'sacred information' to a globally hungry public.¹⁷ Following in the footsteps of its historical predecessors, *Journey Into Life* was ubiquitously present being liberally gifted, with sales figures being significantly increased through bulk selling in multi-packs for generous and superabundant gifting. However this superabundance of grace through the gifting of *Journey Into Life* was qualified in this research as it revealed a more selective approach to distribution with an emphasis on personal engagement with the recipient. Whilst the evangelical 'Argo' may have considered itself to be extravagant in its gifting of its message there were mechanisms in place that employed various levels of discretion and

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 73.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 74.

¹⁶ Morgan, *The Lure of Images*, p. 14.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 13. *Figure 3* shows an image of two female figures liberally distributing the produce of the press. Taken from an 1840s American Tract Society Membership Certificate.

control in the gifting process. As demonstrated in this research, the relational platform of the evangelical 'Argo' played a very significant role in the distribution and exchange of the tract.

One of the intriguing features of Malinowski's original ethnography from which Mauss developed his thesis, was found in the observation that the Trobriand islanders motivations for giving the gift were rooted in a complex web of social factors, including the fact that it was spiritually dangerous not to hand it on.¹⁸ Gift exchange theory raises questions about the motives and motivations for giving gifts and this issue of the motivation to give *Journey Into Life* away was an important aspect of this research. The singularity of the gifting of the tract was expressed in the huge investment of motivational energy amongst the evangelical 'Argo' in its sharing of *Journey Into Life*. Theological analysis revealed this as stemming from a motivational energy of the evangelical 'Argo' rooted in the great commission of Christ. Whilst the process of gifting from the 'Argo' was manifestly benevolent in its intention, there was some evidence of a reward for the evangelical 'Argonauts' in terms of a sense of success when one of their young people professed faith. There was also clear evidence in the booklet itself that respondents would be obligated to give something back by fulfilling specific expectations that involved going to church, praying, reading their bibles, and witnessing to their new found faith.

The priority of grace was made manifest in the *Journey Into Life* narratives in the way that this gift had come to the recipients at important times in their lives. Typically the gift had been given at times of transition such as entry into secondary school, going up to university, leaving university, or having a child baptised. In the Chester and King narratives there was clear evidence of the operation of this prevenient grace that was particularly evident in their theological reflection on early childhood experiences of Jesus. However for the other participants, their encounter with the gift came unexpectedly and spontaneously. As revealed in the research, the evangelical 'Argo' had its roots in the post-war evangelical 'grand strategy' which intentionally sought to recruit

¹⁸ Mauss, *The Gift*, p. 10. 'To keep this thing is dangerous'.

potential future leaders. The incongruity of the gift in terms of the perceived worth of the recipients raised the issue of social class and its relationship to evangelism through *Journey Into Life*. One of the surprises in the booklets publication history was that it began life as a publication designed for two mining communities near Coventry, but gained its popularity in middle-class churches and youth groups. It was widely used in targeted youth ministries aimed at developing future Christian leaders and there was evidence in the interview narratives of upward social mobility and the development of leadership capability through participation in the evangelical 'Argo'. This was illustrative of the pre-judgements that were taking place in evangelism, particularly in relation to perceived levels of literacy and the worth of the recipients in terms of their potential to become leaders.

The efficacy of grace through *Journey Into Life* was identified in the interview narratives particularly in the effectiveness of the decisional act of faith expressed through the prayer of commitment. The dual acts of opening the door to Christ and praying the prayer of decision were central to the efficacy of the tract, as this was shown to have brought the recipients into an experience of the grace of God in the Christ-gift. The non-circularity or one-way nature of the gifting of *Journey into Life* was particularly evident in the way that the gift was given. This was a 'top-down' message, not a form of mutual discovery or dialogue evangelism. As with the treasure hunting evangelists these evangelical 'Argonauts' were clear that they had this message and that it was this gift that they wanted to give unilaterally.¹⁹

A Practical Theology of Grace in *Journey Into Life*

This is the practical theology of grace in the practice of evangelism that emerges from this critical comparison of the gifting of *Journey into Life* with Barclay's six perfections. Through the materiality of the tract and its gift exchange practices a

¹⁹ A feature of evangelicalism highlighted by Morgan who argues that 'Evangelical Protestantism has always been premised on practices of imperative or hortatory mediation, that is, of telling another what it is he or she needs to know, must know for salvation'. David Morgan, Mediation or Mediatisation: The history of media in the study of religion. *Culture and Religion: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 12.02 (2011), 137-152. p. 144.

practical theology of grace has been revealed in which the Christ-gift is offered and received. *Journey Into Life* functioned as a means of grace in the form of the Christ-gift as it was selectively, enthusiastically and effectively given at the right time. This practical theology of grace is now revealed in more detail through the exposition of four significant elements of this research that have enabled *Journey Into Life* to become effective as a means of grace.

Four Elements in the Mediation of Grace through *Journey Into Life*

Evangelical Simplicity

The first of the four elements of *Journey Into Life* that have enabled it to ‘work’ as a tract in its mediation of grace in the Christ-gift is its evangelical simplicity. A major factor in the efficacy of grace through the gifting of *Journey Into Life* was found to be in its simplicity.²⁰ The simplicity of *Journey Into Life*’s presentation of the Christian gospel has been shown in this research to have been an essential factor in the effective delivery of its message enabling it to do what it was designed to do. The efficacy of the cover made the research participants want to pick it up; and nearly all of them, when they read it, found that its tabloid format and simple illustrations made sense of its message. Its visuality, size, collectability, and desirability as an object all contributed to its overall impact and status as an important and memorable article of faith for its young recipients.²¹

As demonstrated in the analysis of the way *Journey Into Life* was read, it was through these simple textual and visual methods that the tract assumed an authoritative place in the lives of these evangelicals. It did this through its provision of a simple foundational theological framework that was riveted into these young minds, where it continued to function normatively within the ongoing operant theologies of their lived religion. Not only was the booklet shown to have served an initial catechetical function, it also provided a form of

²⁰ The identification of the power of simplicity is credited in this research to Brown’s thesis that tracts possess a history as powerful and deceptively simple tools in the dissemination of ideas in the salvation economy. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*, pp. 35-57.

²¹ The development and use of *Journey Into Life* reveals just one of the ways that the historical evangelical movement has, as Bebbington argued, shaped ‘the thought-world’ of the British population. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, p. 276.

simple evangelical creed that was drawn on in times of uncertainty and doubt. For the research participants the simple and straightforward theological trialectic²² in *Journey Into Life's* soteriology, pneumatology and missiology provided an authoritative statement of belief.

Journey Into Life displays an evangelical conviction, and belief in, the power of simplicity in the communication of its message. Barclay's concept of the incongruity of the gift reveals the ways in which although a gift can appear to be given indiscriminately, it may not 'satisfy the criterion of just distribution'.²³ The idea of simplification that first gripped Warren came from the author's frustration, in his context of seeking to communicate this gospel message to people who did not read, and were thereby excluded from his missionary endeavours through the logocentric tracts of the time. As he said:

It was a shattering experience, because I suddenly realised, all the booklets, Maurice Wood and John Stott were useless with people who can't read.²⁴

Arriving at their homes with a coat jacket full of Stott's *Basic Christianity*, he soon found that as he said he was on 'a hiding to nothing' and that those books were all useless with miners whom he recognised 'were far from stupid, bright, quick witted and highly skilled, but not good at reading'.²⁵ He realised that although these people did not read they were very able and intelligent, but had been enculturated into receiving information through 'red top' newspapers that presented their message with a picture, heading and simple text. Warren's innate sense of the incongruity of grace was motivating in his battle to get his simplified tract past the evangelical publishing gatekeepers.

In the contemporary multi-media and digital environment, it seems obvious that images, illustrations and colour are to be used in popular communication but this was not so in the early 1960s when Warren was seeking a publisher. The graphics revolution had only just begun to make its presence

²² A theological trialectic comprised of a specific soteriology, pneumatology and missiology. See chapter nine.

²³ Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, p. 72.

²⁴ Warren, p. 8.

²⁵ Letter from Norman Warren dated 14th November 2011.

known and colour lithographic printing was still expensive and not always viable for small publications.²⁶ In addition to this there was, in Christian publishing at the time, an intellectual snobbery that looked down on the publication of literature that included pictures. Warren's attempt to have Scripture Union publish the tract failed because they would only consider it as a children's publication due to its simplicity and use of pictures. As McDannell has observed:

Those who use non-literary means of expressing ideas about the supernatural and its relationship to the everyday world have not been considered fully adult.²⁷

Even the Church Pastoral Aid Society rejected the booklet for publication in its Falcon booklet series because of its radically simple layout, illustrations and content. Dudley-Smith in his role as commissioning editor for Falcon books recalled how he rejected *Journey Into Life* when Warren first put it forward for publication because of what was deemed, at the time, to be an overly simplistic and too much of a 'literal' presentation. From his logocentric perspective Dudley-Smith said:

The illustrations did no more than provide a visual image for the metaphors and ideas which were already visual in the text; and in that sense added little to the explanation.²⁸

With such a level of prejudice against the simple and visual aspects of the tract, Warren thought that he might have to continue to self-publish.²⁹ Warren's determination to get *Journey Into Life* published in a simple non-glossy format, and with its original illustrations paid off, but it is important to understand that

²⁶ Jonathan Raimes and Lakshmi Bhaskaran, *Retro Graphics: A Visual Sourcebook to 100 Years of Graphic Design* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2007), p. 136. A revolution attributed to youth culture in a move away from form and function towards style as reflected in the designs from this period including the underground press most notably 'Oz' magazine that used [psychedelic] graphics and imagery.

²⁷ McDannell, p. 8. Also chapter seven – Visual Strategies and the Hegemony of The Word

²⁸ Letter from Bishop Timothy Dudley-Smith dated 20th August 2013.

²⁹ With sales of his original experimental version having already moved into the thousands he had a growing confidence about the potential of his booklet.

his persistence emanated from his conviction that he wanted to communicate effectively and simply with his non-literary audience.³⁰ He said:

What this did was to bring illustrative material, the others [Stott, Wood and Nash] had no illustrative material at all. They were really for the sort of literate people.³¹

Although originally created by Warren for two mining communities, this tract had its maximum impact amongst middle-class evangelical churches in Britain, who both CPAS and Scripture Union had initially deemed to be too educated and intellectually advanced to need such a simple presentation of faith. Dudley-Smith's decision to publish *Journey Into Life* with simple illustrations marked a significant turning point in the world of evangelical publishing in Britain. In this decision Dudley-Smith had wrestled with the prevailing hegemony of 'the word' supporting McDannell's observation as highlighted in chapter seven, that the evangelical heritage privileged the 'ear over the eye, hearing over seeing, and the word over the image and the book over the statue'.³² Whilst Dudley-Smith may not have come to endorse Lossky's understanding³³ of the way that icons 'express things in themselves invisible, and render them present, visible and active',³⁴ his decision to publish *Journey Into Life* opened a new door in evangelical Christian publications for the use of illustrations and graphics in Christian publishing for adults, most notably through the publication of the *Good News Bible* with illustrations in 1966, that led to a developing montage of evangelical iconography.³⁵ Dudley-Smith said that 'it cannot have been long after this that we added a couple of booklets to the series in comic strip format' and following this turning point with the publication of *Journey Into Life* they were

³⁰ Ibid. The struggle for simplicity took an unexpected turn when the publisher Dudley-Smith came to the conclusion that he had been wrong to turn this publication down. As he sat in the Archbishops' Commission on evangelism at Lambeth Palace, Dudley-Smith was convicted that he had made a mistake. He said: The occasion was a meeting of the Archbishops' Commission on Evangelism, of which I was at that time by far the most junior member! At the close of our session – probably the break for coffee at 11.00 – I found [as best I remember] the call box in the Palace and rang Norman himself.

³¹ Warren, p. 28.

³² McDannell, p. 13.

³³ See Chapter 7 Iconic Practices of Belief Aboard the Evangelical Argo

³⁴ Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of The Eastern Church*, p. 10.

³⁵ See Chapter 7 Iconography Aboard the Evangelical Argo

increasingly aware of 'the needs of Christians to whom reading did not come as naturally as it does to the clergy!'.³⁶

The simplification of information addressed the incongruity of the gift in terms of the discrimination that had been taking place through the problem of literacy in its original context, but the efficacy of grace in the tract was most clearly seen in youth ministry. The evidence in the participant narratives showed how these young people had picked up fragments and pieces of information about Christianity from different sources including youth groups, Christian camps, and songs. It showed how *Journey Into Life* had enabled these young people to draw together these bits of information into a coherent whole in a way that made sense to them. *Journey Into Life* provided a simple systematic theology and framework into which they were able to place these various pieces of knowledge. This endorses Bailey and Ward's recent research in evangelical youth ministry that showed the way in which young people develop systems for the simplification and assimilation of theological information. Bailey's ethnographic study identified the way that young people develop and use what he described as theological shorthand to simplify, organise and express their beliefs. Bailey's findings³⁷ endorse a form of youth ministry as originally adopted by the evangelical 'Argo' that was intentionally directed towards 'enlarging the theological fragments' of specific themes that have been deposited in the lives of young people.³⁸ In its specific context *Journey Into Life* offered a simple framework for young people, that was able to make sense of the fragments of Christian information that they had picked up in their churches, homes and youth groups. Warren's biography shows how *Journey Into Life* was itself a product of this process of simplification, as he put together the fragments and pieces of evangelical teaching that he had picked up in the mid-twentieth-

³⁶ Letter from Bishop Timothy Dudley-Smith dated 20th August 2013

³⁷ David Bailey, 'Relationships as Communicative Acts in Youth Ministry and Trinitarian Theology', (Kings College London, 2013), p. 139.

³⁸ Pete Ward, *Liquid Ecclesiology: The Gospel and the Church* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), p. 201. This mechanism of simplification and assimilation has also been identified by Ward in his study of evangelical worship songs showing the way that young people take simple fragments of theological information from choruses and then through Christian youth ministry put these 'bits' into a coherent whole. Consequently, Ward proposes that theological education should be intentionally 'expanding the fragments' of existing theological knowledge.

century youth ministry of the evangelical 'Argo'. At interview Warren described how he took bits of gospel teaching that he had picked up and then engaged them in a process of simplification, aided by a youth orientated layout and illustrations in the form of stick men, because as he himself said, 'I can't draw'!³⁹

This simplification of the gospel is, however, paradoxical and the implications of this reach deeply into contemporary discussions within British evangelicalism about evangelical identity and the practice of evangelism. Ward has continued to point out that whilst this 'highly formulaic' and simplified method of expressing faith has the benefits associated with making things simple and clear, it can also have the negative effect of 'fixing the gospel' in simple theological propositions to such an extent that departure from this unchanging gospel paradigm can become problematic for evangelicals. As Ward's most recent research argued, the simplification of the gospel in evangelical tracts such as *Bridge to Life*⁴⁰ had the unforeseen and unintended effect of increasingly solidifying, setting and fixing this gospel formula. This fixing process was identified in this research in the theme of holding on to the gospel that emerged from the interview data. It was revealed in the way that *Journey Into Life* had developed an almost relic-like quality, becoming an important souvenir of faith, preserving the sacred memory of a place once visited, and creating amongst its alumni a form of nostalgic community.⁴¹ Rather than diminishing or limiting faith, this solidifying of the gospel in *Journey into Life* had, in some of the participants helped them to maintain and hold onto their faith in times of difficulty and doubt.

Evangelical Iconography

The second of the four elements of *Journey Into Life* that has enabled it to 'work' as a tract in the effective mediation of grace in the Christ-gift is found in the power of its simple iconography and the consequent impact of this on evangelical identity. Implicit within the material culture methodology of this

³⁹ Warren, p. 9.

⁴⁰ The Navigators, *Bridge to Life*. Ward, *Liquid Ecclesiology*, pp. 113-117.

⁴¹ Ward, *Liquid Church*, p. 28.

research has been Morgan's argument for the 'sacred gaze', understood as a manner of seeing that 'invests an image, a viewer, or an act of viewing with spiritual significance'.⁴² The construction of *Journey Into Life* was itself the result of a particular 'sacred gaze', or as Morgan defines it, a 'social act of looking' that had been developed from within the evangelical 'Argo'. As Morgan explains:

A gaze consists of several parts: a viewer, fellow viewers, the subject of their viewing, the context or setting of the subject, and the rules that govern the particular relationship between viewers and subject.⁴³

In its attention to this complex 'social act of looking', this research has explored not only the 'occasion on which the image is viewed'⁴⁴ but also 'the particular kind of looking'⁴⁵ and the relationship of this gaze to the images and text of the tract. As Morgan has argued, although evangelicalism was a religion of the word, both nineteenth and twentieth-century protestants 'increasingly found that looking at mass-produced images was an act imbued with the power of belief or to make one believe'.⁴⁶ Morgan's research⁴⁷ showed that 'didactic' images have received a favourable reception even amongst 'the staunchest Puritans'. As he points out:

Printed picture-engravings that illustrated religious texts and served to encapsulate religious doctrine – posed no threat to Protestant iconophobes.⁴⁸

The data from the research participants suggested that the images in the booklet *Journey Into Life* were part of the developing visual culture of these evangelicals

⁴² David Morgan, *The Sacred Gaze: Religious Visual Culture In Theory And Practice*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), P. 3.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 4.

⁴⁶ David Morgan, *Protestants and Pictures*, p. 6. This needs to be balanced with Protestantism's historical suspicion and at times hostility towards the image that led to an iconoclasm which left an enduring mark on Cathedrals and historic church buildings of the United Kingdom. See chapter 7 *Souvenir, Relic and Icon of Evangelical faith* for full analysis of this theme.

⁴⁷ From the North American context of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Protestants.

⁴⁸ David Morgan, *Protestants and Pictures*, p. 5-6. As Morgan revealed in his study of the history of visual media in America, 'even the most stringently iconophobic Puritans in England found certain kinds of illustrative imagery acceptable'. *The Lure of Images*, p. 11.

that was contributing to a growing sense of evangelical identity in the three decades from the early 1960s. As Morgan has argued:

Seeing is an operation that relies on an apparatus of assumptions and inclinations, habits and routines, historical associations and cultural practices.⁴⁹

The visual practices used in *Journey Into Life* developed around the apparatus, assumptions, inclinations, habit routines and historical associations of the evangelical faith community.

This 'apparatus' of the evangelical 'Argo' not only influenced the 'sacred gaze' but also contributed to a distinctive identity that was both reflected and embodied in the iconic object *Journey Into Life*. As Morgan argues:

Images are produced by and in turn help construct the social realities that shape the lives of human beings. The study of visual culture scrutinizes not only images but also the practices that put images to use.⁵⁰

Functioning in a manner akin to military regimental colours, evangelicals put *Journey Into Life* to use as a rallying flag in terms of identity, practice and a simple theology.⁵¹ Through the hosting of this visual and textual message by the evangelical 'Argo', a specific ecclesiological and missiological identity was constructed. Analysis of the interview data showed how *Journey Into Life* came to function as one of the key identity papers for the emerging evangelical movement, fitting well with its modernist context of conformity and uniformity. The research participants from the 1970s and 1980s spoke of the way that this booklet was almost always present and visible on board the evangelical 'Argo', particularly through its camps, holidays and 'house parties' as well as in its churches. It was instantly recognised by participants and even just mentioning the 'road sign' tract in pre-interview conversations brought warm and nostalgic reactions.

⁴⁹ David Morgan, *The Sacred Gaze*, p. 3.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 31.

⁵¹ See chapter 7 Iconic Practices of Belief.

This positive reinforcement of evangelical identity through the iconography of simple evangelical cultural artefacts, most notably *Journey Into Life*, provided a strong sense of belonging in the wider evangelical youth movement of the 1960s and 1970s. This growing sense of identity was fostered through participation in the Christian Youth Fellowship Association for older teenagers and the University and Colleges Christian Fellowship for university students. As shown in chapter seven, evangelical identity was reinforced in youth culture not only through *Journey Into Life* but in the production and use of a growing range of cultural artefacts such as stickers, patches, and other merchandise that McDannell identifies as the 'rhetoric of bad taste' expressed through the retailing of 'Christian kitsch'.⁵² As demonstrated in the research narratives, *Journey Into Life* as an object, acted as a type of relic in the collective memory and created what became a form of nostalgic community⁵³ whose passing was the subject of lamentation flowing from a sense of loss.⁵⁴ The holding on to this evangelical gospel paradigm was embodied in the participant's relationship with the physical artefact as, through the act of physically holding and keeping the booklet safe, these evangelicals could connect back and identify with the original spiritual experience of reading it and praying the prayer.⁵⁵ This was illustrated in May's participant interview when he said:

So, this has gone with me from home when I was living with my parents, to single life and to married life, to being Father and Grandfather. It's still here! In a special place and it's been looked after.⁵⁶

It also showed how important this nostalgic role of *Journey Into Life* was in supporting and affirming evangelical identity, particularly during the evangelical identity crisis of the 1980s caused by what Warner describes as the

⁵² McDannell, pp. 164-97 and 222-69.

⁵³ See chapter seven Ecclesiastical Tensions especially in relation to nostalgia. These findings endorse Ward's identification of the resilience of 'mutations of solid church' in the formation of nostalgic communities that 'appeal to an imagined past'. Ward, *Liquid Church*, p. 28-29.

⁵⁴ May, p. 14. Interview talked of feeling 'emotional sadness' when he realised that *Journey Into Life* was about to be eclipsed by *Why Jesus*.

⁵⁵ See chapter 7 Portable Relics of Faith.

⁵⁶ May, p. 9.

‘bifurcation’⁵⁷ of British evangelicalism through the development of the charismatic renewal movement. The common denominator in the life narratives of these differing groups of evangelical participants was found in their sense of the obligation to give the gospel gift and this continued to be central to their common identity. This common identity was shown to have a theological motivational power as these *Journey Into Life* alumni embodied a motivational force that produced the dynamism to take this gospel out beyond the church and into their contemporary contexts. This ‘singularity’ of the gift expressed in this common theological motivation and drive for evangelism was shown to be rooted in the great commission of Matthew 28.19-20.⁵⁸ This remained a powerful driving force behind the evangelical missionary engagement and parochial activity of these *Journey Into Life* alumni, and the data showed how the gift exchange processes, inherent in the practices of the distribution of the *Journey Into Life* gospel paradigm, remained at the heart of evangelical identity throughout this period from 1963 to 1989.

Evangelical Soteriology

The third major element that has enabled *Journey Into Life* to ‘work’ as a tract in the effective mediation of grace in the Christ-gift was found in its distinctive and particular form of soteriology, demonstrated in subscription to a penal and substitutionary explanation of the atonement. The formatting of the gospel in this way was seen as a positive attribute and not problematic in itself with the evangelical narratives in this research showing the formation of a distinctive evangelical gospel identity built around adherence to this soteriology in *Journey Into Life*.⁵⁹ However the research narratives examined in chapter eight identified various degrees of liminality in relation to this soteriology and its gospel

⁵⁷ Particularly through what Warner describes as the ‘entrepreneurial boom in pan-evangelicalism’. Rob Warner, *Reinventing English Evangelicalism*, p. xviii & 16.

⁵⁸ A finding endorsed by Ward’s research that showed the significance of the great commission as a motivational force behind Bill Bright and the Campus Crusade for Christ tract Four Spiritual Laws. Ward, p. 117.

⁵⁹ Subsequent evangelistic models such as *Two Ways to Live* as used in conservative evangelical churches from the late 1980s and the *Why Jesus?* tract from the early 1990s all played a positive role in evangelical ministry.

paradigm.⁶⁰ There was evidence of tension amongst the *Journey Into Life* alumni, who had been growing and developing in their understanding of the mystery and depth of the gospel, but at the same time were not wanting to leave behind or 'move on' from the *Journey Into Life* gospel paradigm. Despite these doubts there continued to be [in this sample] high levels of attachment and ongoing subscription to *Journey Into Life's* simple presentation of propitiation through substitution.⁶¹

This was in marked contrast with Christie's [broad-church] research sample where 'people effectively bypass the traditional theology [of the atoning death of Christ on the cross] in favour of a theology based on God's free forgiveness for penitent sinners', with her research concluding that 'Christianity without atonement would seem to be the dominant model'.⁶² Christie's research demonstrated that amongst her sample there was little evidence of any ability to articulate an understanding of atonement at an 'ordinary' level outside of evangelicalism. However, amongst evangelicals where a simple substitutionary model of the atonement has been adopted as its formal theology, partly but not exclusively through the medium of tracts, there was evidence of a clearly articulated soteriology.⁶³ Amongst the majority of evangelical leaders in this research, the penal and substitutionary explanation of the atonement as originally offered through *Journey Into Life* had remained as their dominant ongoing operant and formal soteriology.⁶⁴ As one research participant said, this was the explanation of atonement that 'clicked into place and made sense',⁶⁵ and it is this simple explanation of atonement that continues to be used to this day in evangelical evangelism⁶⁶ especially through tracts.

The process of simplification in the tract's soteriology was founded on a compromise between the pragmatism of what 'works' in terms of explaining the

⁶⁰ See chapter 8 - Degrees of Liminality.

⁶¹ See theological analysis in chapter nine The Voices of Evangelical Theology.

⁶² Christie, *Ordinary Christology*, p. 262.

⁶³ As well as sermons and evangelical choruses that focus on the cross, the blood, and the sacrifice as well as victory over death and sin.

⁶⁴ See chapter 8 Degrees of Liminality.

⁶⁵ Chester, p. 7.

⁶⁶ Particularly through its incorporation into the global Alpha course.

gospel clearly, and the theological complexity that lies behind its apparently simple representation.⁶⁷ As with any simplification process there was a price to pay in terms of what was either left out or left in, and the resulting product inevitably represents varying degrees of compromise. Having worked with Warren in parish evangelism using *Journey Into Life*, Hurst had a unique insight into the author's own understanding of its simple efficacy. Hurst said:

I never felt Norman was just saying [hey] I've written *Journey Into Life* and it really works, he was just saying what is in *Journey Into Life* is the gospel message, it just so happens that I've been involved in putting this booklet together which gives an account of the gospel [...] I just happened to put it into a booklet and it works.⁶⁸

Hurst also recalled how through working with Warren he came to see that:

The book is Norman's complete understanding of everything you have to do to understand the Christian faith, [he] totally believed in it [...] the passion that he had for the gospel and his complete faith that if you explain the gospel clearly enough people's lives will be changed.⁶⁹

As demonstrated at interview Warren himself held a highly nuanced and developed understanding of the gospel as well as a broadly based soteriological knowledge,⁷⁰ however his evangelical pragmatism and his commitment to what worked took priority in his practice of ministry. Indeed, as one of his former co-workers observed:

He would visit the family three or four times in their home, and Norman was passionate that this stuff [really] works, you could see people's lives [really] changed [...] and he said if you explain the gospel to them you will see them becoming Christians.⁷¹

The positive consequence of simplification in Warren's soteriology and his presentation of the gospel through the *Journey Into Life* was that it provided a simple pragmatic mechanism for evangelism that worked in bringing people [like the ones Warren visited] to faith in Christ.

⁶⁷ This theological complexity was surveyed and 'mapped' in chapter nine.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 11.

⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 11&16.

⁷⁰ Warren holds a post graduate theology degree from Cambridge University.

⁷¹ Hurst, p. 10.

Evangelical Decision

The fourth element that has enabled *Journey Into Life* to 'work' as a tract in the effective mediation of grace in the Christ-gift was found in the evangelical decision. The process of making a decision for Christ that was analysed in chapter six focussed on two specific actions in opening the door and praying the prayer. This call to a decision was seen by the interviewees as an important aspect in the tract's effectiveness for them in their own process of receiving the Christ-gift. Warren's narrative revealed the influence of the 1950s Billy Graham 'crusades', particularly in the thrust of the tract towards a decision for Christ through opening the door and praying the prayer. This was in marked contrast with much contemporary practice where the decisional mechanism was shown to have been moving away from the decisional act of opening the door to Jesus Christ and towards an emphasis on explicit rather than implicit experience of the Holy Spirit.⁷² The interview data also showed a gradual move away from historical evangelical Christocentricity,⁷³ towards a more pronounced pneumatology in the presentation of the *Journey Into Life* message, as more emphasis was placed on subjective life experience.⁷⁴ This had resulted in the practice of resituating the decisional act in the context of worship music or prayer ministry rather than in personal and often private prayer after reflection on the didactic content of the tract.⁷⁵ This movement was particularly striking in the broader material culture of these evangelicals especially in the contrast between the didactic content in the choruses of the *Journey Into Life* evangelical 'Argo' reflected in the 'Youth Praise' song book,⁷⁶ and the content of contemporary worship forms designed to

⁷² This was particularly evident in the comparison of the *Journey Into Life* paradigm with the Alpha course where the emphasis is on reception of the Spirit on the Holy Spirit weekend. See chapter 10 'Praying the Prayer on Alpha'.

⁷³ A shift also identified by Warner who argues that even 'Bebbington's framework requires an additional and specific recognition of Christocentricity'. Warner, p. 17. A view also endorsed by Barclay, pp. 11-12.

⁷⁴ Part of the process of what Warner describes as the 'bifurcation of the evangelical tradition'. Warner, p. xviii.

⁷⁵ See chapter 4 – Ceremonies of Transfer in Popular Music. Also Heard, pp. 132-37. His data shows levels of confusion and even disappointment from some participants in these 'ministry times'.

⁷⁶ Michael Baughen, 'Youth Praise', (London: Falcon Books, 1969). See chapter 7 – Iconography Aboard the Evangelical Argo.

encourage charismatic experience and encounter.⁷⁷ This move towards the subjective in the decisional process was further demonstrated in the comparison with contemporary evangelistic trends, notably amongst the treasure hunting evangelists in chapter ten. These narratives of encounter differed from the type represented in the *Journey Into Life* interviews where participants engaged in a rational reflection on the content of the tract [often on their own] towards narratives of encounter that reported engagement with God as taking place in a trans-rational context⁷⁸ both inside and outside the worship event.⁷⁹ The overall effect of this shift was a move away from the Augustinian ‘take up and read’ culture as evidenced in the *Journey Into Life* participant narratives towards a less word-based and more experience-centred reception of the Christ-gift. However, despite these shifts within evangelicalism, evangelical tracts themselves have retained a decisional mechanism that, as evidenced in the interview data, has been effective in enabling the reception of the Christ-gift.

Journey Into Life and The Future of Printed Tracts in a Digital Age.

The Future for *Journey Into Life*

Journey Into life was a Christian publishing phenomenon for as the publisher Richard Herkes said it was ‘the best-selling thing we ever had’.⁸⁰ Warren never claimed any royalties for the publication choosing instead to freely gift it to the church so that it could be used to maximum effect.⁸¹ It is impossible to quantify the impact and reach of this small tract that is still at work, behind the scenes, bringing people to faith in Jesus Christ.⁸² Warren continues to receive letters

⁷⁷ Ward, pp. 121-22. Ward identifies the shift from ‘an emphasis on teaching doctrine to songs which are meant to be used as a vehicle for a more experimental charismatic worship’.

⁷⁸ Heard, pp. 136-7. Heard follows Walker’s assessment interpreting such narratives of experience as largely ‘psycho-social constructions’ experienced in the context of excitement and suggestion.

⁷⁹ Ward, *Selling Worship*, pp.152-55. As Ward points out the focus is on the metaphor of the heart. In an interesting twist in charismatic evangelical practice the tract’s metaphor of asking Jesus in [to your heart] is recast in the heart of God where through this intimate worship Jesus is to be found.

⁸⁰ Herkes, p. 1.

⁸¹ When Kingsway Publishing took over from CPAS Warren received a small payment of 1p per copy which he said paid for the children’s music lessons.

⁸² *Journey Into Life* was honoured in the 2012 Olympics when it was selected as the tract to be incorporated into the ‘On Your Marks’ evangelistic campaign booklet along with new graphics and an edited version of Marks gospel. 500,000 copies were printed for distribution at the games.

from people who have been impacted by the printed publication of his tract; although he has kept few of these, one of the letters that he has kept expresses the simplicity and power of this printed tract's reception. In 1975 a young girl called Jane wrote as follows:

I have read your book *Journey Into Life*, and *The Way Ahead* and I now feel that I am a Christian. These books have meant that I can now talk to God, and try to follow him, and soon I am going to try to turn someone to his way. I am now attending a young people's fellowship, a junior church, and I am trying to find a Bible Study book. Thank you for making my life worth living, and for bringing me to terms with God.⁸³

There is however a sense in which the *Journey Into Life* that was the subject of Jane's letter and indeed this research no longer exists, for although the words continue to be reproduced, the original artwork has been abandoned and some of its force and genius is thereby lost. As would be expected of a fifty-year-old cultural icon and souvenir of evangelical faith the illustrations in the original version are now dated and the text is showing its age.⁸⁴ But in spite of its age the life of this printed tract is far from over with its continuing afterlife demonstrated in its rebirth complete with new graphics for the 2012 Olympics.⁸⁵ This *Journey Into Life* evangelistic paradigm has also enjoyed a significant renaissance over the last twenty-five years through the motivational energy and dynamism of the Alpha course that has effectively globalised this inherited model of evangelism, especially through the printing and world-wide distribution of its tract *Why Jesus?*⁸⁶ This paradigm has been clearly identifiable in what

Norman Warren, *On Your Marks: The Gospel of Mark Followed by Journey into Life* (South Croydon: Deo Gloria Resources, 2009). A *Journey Into Life* Bible was also published.

⁸³ Letter dated 12th April 1975 and sent to Norman Warren from Jane aged 13 who had attended a come together meeting where he had been speaking on 3rd January 1975. This was followed by a P.S. that said: 'I now realise that all vicars are not stuffy old men who talk about God in some foreign language too complicated for someone of my 13 years'.

⁸⁴ See chapter 7 Souvenir, Relic and Icon of Evangelical Faith.

⁸⁵ Sales of fifty-thousand copies a year. A figure confirmed through royalty receipts by the author 21/9/2017.

⁸⁶ Or as Ward argues 'McDonaldized'. Pete Ward, "Alpha: 'The McDonaldization of Religion?'," *Anvil*, 15 (1998), pp. 279-86. Applying Ritzer's thesis of efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control as originally conceived by Max Weber in his notion of the 'iron cage' of rationalisation. George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society*, Revised New Century Edition edn (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2004). A theme also taken up by John Drain, *The McDonaldization of the Church*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2000). And Guest, pp.

Warner describes as this 'late-modern charismatic entrepreneurialism',⁸⁷ particularly in the churches associated with Holy Trinity Brompton. It has also been continuously employed in conservative evangelical churches that have eschewed the charismatic theology of the Alpha course, but have continued to use the *Journey Into Life* paradigm in their approach to evangelism.⁸⁸ In what Strhan defines in her research as 'word-based'⁸⁹ evangelical congregations such as St Helen's Bishopsgate and All Souls Langham Place, this *Journey Into Life* method for evangelism through the printed tract is still in use. These larger evangelical churches of the evangelical 'Argo', particularly in cities have continued to provide major platforms for the maintenance of the *Journey Into Life* evangelistic paradigm in its printed form.⁹⁰

Evangelical Innovation and the Digital Age

Warren's development of *Journey Into Life* showed that when it comes to giving the gift of God in Christ, evangelicals have always innovated and evolved to meet the challenge of communication in the context of social diversity and cultural change.⁹¹ As Morgan points out 'evangelicalism is about publishing essential information'⁹² and 'extracting the word, the written voice of God from the bible and transmitting it in spoken, written or graphic form'.⁹³ Whilst it is tempting for evangelicals to dream of a printed tract for our times with the impact and reach of *Journey Into Life*, this research points to a potentially far reaching future for the tract. On the one hand the repackaging, resizing, rebranding and remarketing of the existing printed form of *Journey Into Life* looks set to continue, at least in

202-3. Who identifies the global impact of this paradigm through Alpha especially in terms of its 'normalising force'.

⁸⁷ Warner, p. 37.

⁸⁸ Jensen. Conservative evangelicals have favoured Jensen's 1989 tract *Two Ways to Live*.

⁸⁹ Anna Strhan, *Aliens and Strangers*, p. 82.

⁹⁰ The sales staff at the Christian Literature Crusade bookshop in central London confirmed that *Journey Into Life* is still one of their most popular tracts and is sold to a wide range of evangelical and Pentecostal churches including some megachurches in the capital.

⁹¹ A persistent paradox identified by Guest and Davie showing 'the dual nature of evangelicalism, which in many ways shields itself from cultural change but at the same time incorporates much of its essence'. Davie, p. 141. Guest also identifies this dialectical relationship between the suspicion of contemporary culture and more conservative expressions of evangelical practice and belief. Guest, p. 216.

⁹² David Morgan, *Mediation or Mediatisation*, p. 144.

⁹³ Ibid.

the short term. However, just as the graphics revolution of the mid-twentieth-century provided Warren with a way to use pictures, the new media of the twenty-first-century offers an unprecedented opportunity and challenge for today's young evangelicals in the creation of innovative new tracts. Whilst the future of the printed tract remains uncertain the digital media of the twenty-first-century offers enormous potential for the mediatisation of the Christ-gift in digital form.⁹⁴ As Morgan observes 'today the sacred is most often encountered in media-films, games, music, television programmes or novels'.⁹⁵ Just as the technological expansion of print media enabled a 'continuing shift from orality to print that resulted in a new conception and experience of Christendom as a far flung network'⁹⁶ so the technology of the new media offers an equally powerful new opportunity for the mediatisation of 'sacred information'.⁹⁷ Carried now in a fraction of a second to pockets and handbags all over the world there lies before the evangelist of the twenty-first-century an unprecedented opportunity to reach the world with the Christ-gift.

Digital Evangelism

This opportunity for digital evangelism has been the focus of considerable investment and research in the Church of England since 2016. The Church of England's website states its commitment and intention with regard to digital evangelism as follows:

We will create a basis for digital apologetics, enabling individuals with digital materials and resources to present their faith confidently.⁹⁸

In a presentation of its progress in digital evangelism to the Church of England's General Synod in February 2018, the digital communications research group reported on the success of its Christmas campaign #Godwithus. The report

⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 140. Mediatisation refers to 'the increased role of mediated cultural products...in the development and maintenance of cultural communities'.

⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 151.

⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 150.

⁹⁷ Ibid. p. 144.

⁹⁸ <http://www.churchofEngland.org/about/renewal-and.../evangelism-and-witness>. Accessed 13/4/2018

claimed that the whole campaign had reached 6.8 million people through a combination of film and printed resources, of which 98,000 had been sold.⁹⁹ As part of its threefold 'digital communications strategy' the report specifically targets evangelism as its goal along with discipleship and the common good.¹⁰⁰ The Church of England is not the only organisation that has been investing in the research and development of digital theology in the United Kingdom. Work has also been taking place at an academic level with the establishment of the CODEC Research Centre¹⁰¹ at Durham University for the study of digital theology. This was initiated as a recognition of the way that the church is changing through its 'increasing use of digital technology in worship, pastoral practice and evangelism'.¹⁰² At a popular level CODEC has partnered with the Premier Digital Awards & Conference which aims to 'inspire and envision churches and the Christian community with what can be achieved through the New Media'.¹⁰³ These developments point towards a positive future for the evangelistic tract in digital form in the United Kingdom, a vision that has already been developed in the United States of America from the late 1990s.

The Digital Tract

In 1998 Billy Graham spoke in a TED talk about how at breakfast with CEO's and leaders in Silicon Valley, he had an 'eye opening experience' about 'the world that is yet to come through technology'.¹⁰⁴ Early in the digital technology revolution of the 1990s the Billy Graham organisation committed itself to evangelism through digital media, developing amongst other things the medium of digital tracts.¹⁰⁵ Today the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's online

⁹⁹ General Synod: Presentation on Digital evangelism. Church Times 16th Feb 2018. www.churchtimes.co.uk/.../uk/general-synod-presentation-on-digital-evangelism. Accessed 13/4/2018

¹⁰⁰ Digital Evangelism: Adrian Harris Head of Digital Communications for the Church of England. Report given to General Synod 16th February 2018. <https://www.churchofengland.org/.../sharing-first-full-year-digital-evangelism-general-synod>. Accessed 13/4/2018

¹⁰¹ In 2015 CODEC won £750K of funding to develop research in digital theology.

¹⁰² <https://www.dur.ac.uk/codec> Accessed 13/4/2018.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Billy Graham TED Talk 1998 YouTube Accessed 14/4/2018.

¹⁰⁵ Endorsing Morgan who points out that 'Evangelical Christians from Martin Luther to Billy Graham have invested their greatest resources as preachers, writers and cultural producers in this urgent act of communication'. David Morgan, *Mediation or Mediatisation*, p.144.

version of its 'Peace With God' tract, called PeaceWithGod.net, is a global leader in the marketplace of digital evangelistic tracts, claiming 8 million 'decisions'. This digital tract took the structure, text and illustrations of the original printed tract and added four YouTube videos. These videos were a combination of images, music, Billy Graham's preaching [of the text of the printed tract] and testimony. This translation of the printed tract for digital use shows the potential for the translation of other tracts such as *Journey Into Life* which could also employ this enhanced visual input through video, music and testimony as well as text and illustrations. However, more research is needed in this particular field of digital evangelism particularly in the translation of the evangelistic tract paradigm into digital and visually-interactive formats. Implicit within one early study of the function of the new media in mission was the criticism that this form of evangelism was just 'throwing the evangelical message out there'.¹⁰⁶ This is an important caution and points towards the need for more explicit empirical work about the efficacy of intentional digital evangelism, especially through digital tracts. Further empirical research into the difference between the gifting of printed tracts like *Journey Into Life* and their digital successors could provide important information about the way that tracts are functioning [or not] in the digital space.

Back to The Gift

This research has shown how for three decades this iconic road sign tract and humble signature artefact of the British evangelical movement played a largely unrecognised but important role in the development of a unique and influential evangelical identity in the United Kingdom. By holding onto it and carrying it in a pocket or a hand bag this small article of evangelical faith was gifted from a highly motivated and organised evangelical 'Argo'. The research narratives have shown how the presentation of this simple tract resulted in a demonstration of grace in the lives of its recipients. Following in the footsteps of the author

¹⁰⁶ Peter Phillips and others, *Digital Communication, the Church and Mission* (Durham: CODEC Church Growth Resourcing Mission Bulletin, 2013).

Norman Warren these *Journey Into Life* 'Argonauts' became leaders of churches, thus carrying this gospel message not only in pockets and handbags, but also in their lives, where their embodied faith has served as a powerful and enduring tract. This study has shown how *Journey Into Life* 'worked' as a tract because of its effective mediation of grace in the Christ-gift through its employment of evangelical simplicity, iconography, soteriology and a decisional mechanism. As the digital world expands the future of the printed tract is uncertain and whilst this evangelical icon will continue to be reproduced in the short term, the future of the tract may well lie in the arena of digital, rather than mechanical reproduction. The potential reach for a global tract like *Journey Into Life* in digital form is enormous and the possibilities offered by rapidly evolving digital media offer an unprecedented opportunity for the mediatisation of the Christ-gift that *Journey Into Life* so effectively delivered in Britain between 1963 and 1989.

Appendix 1.

Detailed breakdown of the process of collation of emergent categories into the five major research themes:

- Theme 1. Given it
- Theme 2. Reading it
- Theme 3. Praying it
- Theme 4. Holding onto it
- Theme 5. Handing it on

Chester

- Friends 1
- Youth group 1
- Being given *Journey Into Life* 1
- At the right time 2
- Initiated new thinking 2
- It explained 2
- The pictures 2
- The coin 2
- The cloud 2
- The signs 2
- Making sense 2
- It clicked 2
- Radical decision 2
- Aware of The Holy Spirit 2
- Presence of God and Jesus 2
- Strong Desire to tell other people about her faith 5
- This gospel 3
- Her experience of Jesus in Childhood 3

Wells

- The Pictures 2
- Simplicity 2
- The cloud 2
- The cross 2
- The door 3

Choice 3
 Decision 3
 Prayer 3
 Change 3
 Progression 2
 Sequencing 2
 Of the gospel 2
 Makes sense 2
 The Christian story 2
 A Christian home 1
 The gospel in Journey Into Life 3
 A straight-lined (linear) outline 2
 Made sense of the Christian story 2
 Praying the prayer 3
 Supernatural tingling 3
 Ongoing attachment to the booklet 4
 Kept 4
 In pocket 5
 Handed out 5
 It works 5

Kerr

Decision 3
 Change 3
 Praying the prayer 3
 Tangible 4
 Physical object of faith 4
 Hold onto 4
 A symbol of remembrance 4
 Simple 2
 Enabling tool 2
 Handed out 1
 Decision 3
 Not made clear in churches today 5

Hurst

Handed out handed 1
 Understanding as a means of access to faith 2
 Understanding the gospel. 2
 A tool 2
 It works 5
 It 1
 What it means to be 2
 How to become a Christian 2
 Making a decision or commitment 3

Foundational prayer 3
 Joining the evangelical camp 1
 Strong sense of authority 4
 Solid foundation 4

Wood

Youth Group 1
 Crisis opportunity 3
 Tipping point 3
 Epiphany 3
 Pray the prayer 3
 Jesus 3
 Open the door and come into his life 3
 Speaking in tongues 3
 Knew totally 3
 Heart 3
 Christian 3
 Understanding 2
 The Spirit 3
 Light came on 3
 Mind was illuminated 3
 Introducing people to Jesus 5
 Getting people connected 5
 Link in the chain 5
 Simple 2
 Distilled 2
 Minimalistic 2
 Visual 2
 Kind of old 4
 Works 5
 Enabling people to respond 5

May

Christian camp 1
 Succinct 2
 Access 2
 Simple explanation 2
 What the Christian faith was all about 2
 It made a huge amount of sense 2
 Understand 2
 Core of the Christian faith 2
 Resonate 2
 Connect 2
 A life-long commitment 4
 Profound experience of the Holy Spirit 3

Real 3
 Decision 3
 Commitment to Christ 3
 Very important booklet 4
 Reassurance 4
 Reaffirm the basis of his Christian belief 4

Ford

Gave 1
 Church Youth Group 1
 Girlfriend 1
 Outside 1
 Didn't feel in 1
 Home 1
 Studied it 2
 Make sense 2
 Gospel message 2
 Sin 2
 Christ for me 2
 Who God is 2
 Challenge to commit his life 3
 If he was real 3
 Praying the prayer 3
 Encounter 3
 Jesus in a vision 3
 God being there 3
 Loving 3
 Answering prayers 3
 Changed dramatically 3
 Stopped nicking stuff 3
 Stopped swearing 3
 Friendly 5
 Sharing 5
 Gospel message 5
 This full-blown tract 5
 An emotional attachment 4
 To keep this on the table 4

King

Family home 1
 Crusader camp 1
 Reading the booklet 2
 Making sense 2
 Always been a Christian 3
 Always prayed 3

Found himself resisting the whole thing pushing towards a decision 3
 Evangelical act of faith 3
 Already a Christian 3
 Theological journey 5
 Theological paraphernalia 4
 A systematic theology 2
 Thinking theologically 2
 Artificial 5
 The core 4
 Never departed 4

Clements

Given 1
 Brother 1
 Cambridge University 1
 Navigators 1
 Basic grounding in the gospel 1
 Sunday school 1
 Methodist home 1
 Had to do something about this 3
 Profession of faith 3
 Simple tool 2
 A good distillation of the Gospel 2
 Clear 2
 Uncluttered 2
 Intelligible 2
 Understood 2
 Linear 2
 Logical 2
 Rational 2
 Modern approach made sense 2
 Sealed the deal 3
 Praying the prayer 3
 Sealed 3
 Calmness 3
 Extraordinary powerful sense of a deep sense of conviction of the presence of God 3
 Commitment of faith 3
 Eternally grateful 4
 Important part of him 4
 That is always in the heart 4

Dench

Given 1
 Vicar 1

Baptism visit 1
 Evangelical Sunday school 1
 Church youth club 1
 Read it 2
 Made sense 2
 Clarity 2
 Acting as a catalyst 2
 Crystalizing 2
 Containing in a nutshell the evangelical perspective 2
 A point of decision 3
 Frightened 3
 Praying the prayer 3
 Pivotal point 3
 Life changing commitment 3
 No going back 3
 Not being a visual person 2
 The words 2
 Exact words 3
 The prayer 3
 To make his decision 3
 Powerful spiritual experience 3
 Warmth washing over and through 3
 Deep sense of peace 3
 Transformed 3
 Fondness for *Journey Into Life* 4
 Giving copies to others 5
 Black and white thinkers 5
 Could work today 5
 It still resonates 5

Brown

The road signs on the front 1
 Thrust into her hand at 1
 Christian union meetings 1
 School 1
 University Campus Christian union 1
 Read this stuff 2
 Could virtually recite what they were going to say 2
 Easy message 2
 Really painful 2
 Really offensive bilge 2
 All she needed to do was to repent and all would be fine 2
 She was intrinsically bad 2
 Sinful 2
 CP was all her own fault 2
 Needed to pray for forgiveness 2
 Jesus died for her 2

Loved her personally 2
 All would be sorted because Jesus loves you right? 2
 Little leaflets made her angry 1
 Her life still felt like crap 2
 All utter bollocks 2
 Took the little leaflet, ripped it up and chucked it on the ground 1
 A bit naïve 2
 Potted digest of how to get faith 2
 Genuinely worries about the content of some of that stuff 2
 A dialect she didn't understand 2
 Another route 5
 Starts from where people are 5
 There might be a better way 5

Herne

Took 1
 Road signs 1
 Reading it on her own 2
 Clear 2
 Simple 2
 Bold 2
 Easy to understand 2
 Familiar symbols 2
 Made sense with an initial 2
 Decision 3
 Prayer 3
 Spiritual journey 3
 Enlightenment 3
 Process 3
 Warming to Jesus 3
 Clarifying her understanding 2
 Theological framework 2
 Did it by the book 3
 Clearly remembers 4
 Around 4
 Handed out 5

Appendix 2

Collation of Categorical data for further Thematic Analysis

Categorical data collated under the theme 'Given it'

Friends, Youth group, being given *Journey Into Life*, at the right time, a Christian home, handed out, joining the evangelical camp, youth group, Christian camp, gave, church youth group, girlfriend, outside, didn't feel in, home, family home, crusader camp, always been a Christian, given, brother, Cambridge university, navigators, basic grounding in the Gospel, Sunday School, Methodist home, given, vicar, baptism visit, evangelical Sunday school, church youth club, the road signs on the front, thrust into her hand, Christian union meeting, school, university campus Christian union, took.

Categorical data collated under the theme 'Reading it'

Initiated new thinking, it explained it, the pictures, the coin, the cloud, the signs, making sense, it clicked, this gospel, the pictures, simplicity, the cloud, the cross, the door, progression, sequencing, of the gospel, makes sense, the Christian story, the gospel in *Journey Into Life*, a straight line (linear) outline, made sense of the Christian story, simple, enabling tool, not made clear in churches today, understanding as a means of access to faith, understanding the gospel, a tool, it, how to become a Christian, understanding, simple, distilled, minimalistic, visual, succinct, access, simple explanation, what the Christian faith was all about, it made a huge amount of sense, understand, core of the Christian faith, resonate, connect, commitment to Christ, studied it, make sense, gospel message, sin, Christ for me, who God is, gospel message, reading the booklet, making sense, already a Christian, theological journey, thinking theologically, simple tool, a good distillation of the gospel, clear, uncluttered, intelligible, understood, linear, logical, rational, modern approach made sense, read it, made sense, clarity, crystalizing, containing in a nutshell the evangelical perspective, not being a visual person, the words, black and white thinkers, read this stuff, could virtually recite what they were going to say, message really painful, really offensive bilge, she was intrinsically bad, sinful, CP was her own fault, Jesus died for her, loved her personally, all would be sorted because Jesus loves you right, little leaflets made her angry, a bit naïve, potted digest of how to get faith, genuinely worries about the content of some of that stuff, a dialect she didn't understand, road signs, reading it, clear, simple, bold, easy to understand, familiar symbols, made sense, process, warming to Jesus, clarifying her understanding, theological framework.

Categorical data collated under the theme 'Praying it'

Radical decision, aware of the Holy Spirit, presence of God and Jesus, her experience of Jesus in childhood, choice, decision, prayer, change, praying the prayer, supernatural tingling, it works, decision, change, praying the prayer, decision, it works, making a decision or commitment, foundational prayer, crisis opportunity, tipping point, epiphany, pray the prayer, Jesus, open the door and come into my life, speaking in tongues, knew totally, heart, Christian, The Spirit, light came on, mind was illuminated, profound experience of the Holy Spirit, real, decision, challenge to commit his life, if he was real, praying the prayer, encounter, Jesus is a vision, God being there, loving, answering prayers, changed dramatically, stopped nicking stuff, stopped swearing, always prayed, found himself resisting the whole thing pushing towards a decision, evangelical act of faith, had to do something about this, profession of faith, sealed the deal, praying the prayer, sealed, calmness, extraordinary powerful sense of a deep sense of conviction of the presence of God, commitment of faith, catalyst, a point of decision, frightened, praying the prayer, pivotal point, life changing commitment, no going back, exact words, the prayer, to make his decision, powerful spiritual experience, warmth washing over and through, deep sense of peace, all she needed to do was to repent and all would be fine, needed to pray for forgiveness, her life still felt like crap, all utter bollocks, another route, decision, prayer, spiritual journey, enlightenment, by the book.

Categorical data collated under the theme 'Holding onto it'

Ongoing attachment to the booklet, kept, tangible, physical object of faith, hold onto, a symbol of remembrance, what it means to be, strong sense of authority, solid foundation, kind of old, a lifelong commitment, very important booklet, reassurance, reaffirm the basis of his Christian belief, an emotional attachment, to keep this on the table, theological paraphernalia, a systematic theology, the core, never departed, eternally grateful, important part of him, that is always in the heart, transformed, fondness for, it still resonates, took the little leaflet, ripped it up and chucked it on the ground, clearly remembers, around.

Categorical data collated under the theme 'Handing it on'

Strong desire to tell other people about her faith, in the pocket, handed out, handed out, introducing people to Jesus, getting people connected, link in the chain, works, enabling people to respond, friendly, sharing, this full-blown tract, artificial, giving copies to others, it could work today, starts from where people are, there might be a better way, handed out.

Appendix 3

This Appendix presents the research interview data that forms the basis of the narratives of encounter in chapter three. Each participant's narrative is preceded with its key codes and emergent categories are underlined being set within a concise summary narrative utilising a data reduction strategy that collates this categorical data into five central research themes for analysis.

Narrative One – Wells: 'The whole gospel was sequenced'.

Codes:

the most important thing, pictures, the pictures were critical, very-very simple, permeated deep into me, the door, something to walk through, the cloud, two pictures of the cross, I understood, it made sense, it all fitted together, straight-line person, truths that I knew but they were sequenced, the whole gospel was sequenced, sort of progression, choice, pivotal point, the decision, prayed the prayer, tingling, changed, deep attachment to this booklet, in my pocket, it works.

Categories: (underlined)

The pictures and their simplicity were a very important category particularly the cloud, the cross and the door to be walked through. The categories of choice, decision, prayer and change were emphasised. A significant category was Well's emphasis on the progression and sequencing of the gospel in enabling him to make sense of the Christian narrative that he had been brought up with in a Christian home. The presentation of the gospel in *Journey Into Life* provided a straight-lined [linear] outline that made sense of the Christian story. Following praying the prayer he experienced a phenomenon that he described as supernatural tingling. There was a high level of ongoing attachment to the booklet with copies being kept in his pocket and handed out because it works.

Narrative Two – Kerr: 'It enabled me to make that decision'.

Codes:

evangelical, gave me, things to give up, change, the prayer, decision, decided, on my own, personal, enabled, tool, physically, tangible, hold onto, still got it, remember, clear, easy, simple

Categories:

There was a strong emphasis on the category of decision and change reinforced through praying the prayer. The booklet was tangible, important as a physical object of faith to literally hold onto as a symbol of remembrance on Kerr's faith journey. *Journey Into Life* was perceived as a simple and enabling tool that was handed out, read and used to enable Kerr to make a faith decision. Kerr felt that this emphasis on a decision is something that is not made clear in churches today.

Narrative Three – Chester: 'But it's still the Gospel, isn't it?'

Codes:

Friends, given, right time, started me thinking, explained, pictures, made sense, it clicked, fast, a decision. The Holy Spirit, God's Presence, Jesus, radical, wanted people to get it like I'd got it, it's still the Gospel, isn't it? Jesus with me as a child

Categories:

The category of friends and the youth group were important as was being given *Journey Into Life* at the right time. Its role in initiating new thinking was significant as it explained with the pictures of the coin, the cloud and the signs that were all making sense, so that it clicked, and Chester made a radical decision. She became aware of the Holy Spirit and the presence of God and Jesus. This gave her a strong lifelong desire to tell other people about her faith although recently she had been reflecting on this gospel and its relationship to her experience of Jesus in childhood.

Narrative Four – Hurst: 'It has a really strong sense of authority'.

Codes:

house-party, camp, handed, given, tool, prayed, decision, choice, commitment, time, understand, big community, the gospel, foundation, evangelical, become Christian/Christian(s)/The Christian faith, it works, strong sense of authority in my life, concrete and tangible.

Categories:

The categories of being handed out and then handed on were important. There was an emphasis on understanding as a means of access to faith including understanding 'the gospel'. *Journey Into Life* was understood as a 'tool' that 'works'. 'It' was recognised as presenting a particular understanding of what it means to 'be' and how to 'become a Christian'. There was an emphasis on making a decision, or commitment using the foundational prayer in the booklet and thereby joining the evangelical camp. *Journey Into Life* had a strong sense of authority over Hurst's faith providing a solid foundation being referred back to in times of uncertainty or doubt.

Narrative Five – Wood: 'My epiphany came through this'.

Codes:

Evangelised, my epiphany, tipping point, crisis opportunity, the thing, enabled, that door to open, Jesus knocking, the door, where's the door? ask Jesus, to break the door down, light came on, my mind was illuminated, my heart, spoke in tongues, such a short prayer, then understood, the spirit that gives us understanding, I knew totally, I knew I was a Christian, went through the booklet, say this prayer, introducing people to Jesus, giving out Journey Into Life, link in the chain, used extensively, universities, something in their hands, distilling, minimalistic, so simple, kind of old, it still works, connected.

Categories:

The context of the Youth Group and Student Christian group was significant with *Journey Into Life* acting as a crisis opportunity and the tipping point into an epiphany by enabling Wood to pray the prayer and to ask Jesus to open the door and come into his life. His prayer was immediately followed by an experience of speaking in tongues so that Wood felt that he knew totally in his heart that he was a Christian. Wood said that prior to this his understanding was limited until this experience of the Spirit when the light came on and his mind was illuminated. Immediately he started introducing people to Jesus and getting people connected, with *Journey Into Life* and becoming a significant link in the chain. He appreciated the booklet's simple, distilled, minimalistic, visual and kind

of old approach, which he felt even today still works in enabling people to respond.

Narrative Six – May: ‘The basis of my Christian belief’.

Codes:

Camps, Scripture Union, pictures, cloud of sin, made sense, Jesus clearing the barrier, simple explanation, connected, prayed, profound experience of the Holy Spirit, original, precious, choice, directions, stayed with me, reassuring, seeing it around, core of Christian faith in it.

Categories:

The context of the Christian camp was important for May as was the booklet’s succinct easy access and simple explanation of what the Christian faith was all about. It made a huge amount of sense and it helped him to understand the core of the Christian faith. Not only did the whole content resonate and connect, but it enabled him to make a lifelong commitment, as well as resulting in a profound experience of the Holy Spirit and a faith that he described as real. The removal of the cloud of sin was significant, as was the decision to make a commitment to Christ. As a treasured personal artefact, this very important booklet played a significant role in his ongoing life of faith providing him with reassurance and functioning to reaffirm the basis of his Christian belief in the years that followed, as a General Practitioner and later as a Vicar in the Church of England.

Narrative Seven – Ford: ‘Keep this on the table’.

Codes:

Church group, very nice, very kind, kept going to this group, gave me it, took it home, good to read through, think about it, I studied it, yeah that’s the Christian faith nice, one Good News Bible and three Journey Into Lifes, it was the tract at the time, it made sense, ABC and D, the tool that God used, like a course, who God is, what sin is, Christ died for me, the gospel message, commit your life, with this prayer, the challenge, to do something, I didn’t feel in, I pray the prayer and I’m in, a now moment, now or never, Christ outside or inside, letting him in, keeping him out, are you real, I could see Jesus, a vision, like it was yesterday, that encounter, God being there, God loving me, God hearing my prayers, let go

emotionally, encountered Jesus, changed dramatically, stopped nicking stuff, kept using Journey Into Life, keep this on the table, that's a full blown tract, I would like it to work today, not PC, mentions sin, mentions hell, I've got an emotional attachment to this.

Categories:

Three different people gave Ford a copy of *Journey Into Life* after being taken to a Church Youth Group by a girlfriend. At first he felt he was on the outside and didn't feel in but he took the tract home, studied it and it began to make sense. Reading the gospel message about sin, Christ for me, and who God is as well as the challenge to commit his life, resulted in Ford asking God if he was real and praying the prayer. This was followed by an encounter with Ford seeing Jesus in a vision and having the sense of God being there, loving him and answering prayers. Following this, Ford's life changed dramatically especially at his work where he stopped nicking stuff, stopped swearing, and started being friendly and sharing this gospel message with his colleagues. Ford kept using this full-blown tract and identified an emotional attachment to it wanting to keep this on the table in his work as a professional evangelist.

Narrative Eight – King: 'I recognise it immediately'.

Codes:

recognised it immediately, in the home, Crusader camp, had one that was mine, the sheer fact of having the booklet, makes sense, remember reading what is a Christian, the whole thing was pushing towards a decision, I thought I'd always been a Christian, resisting what this was telling me, I prayed it on my own, I don't think it made any difference because I always prayed, by my bed with my bible, part of the paraphernalia, I was thinking theologically, articulated clearly for the first time, kind of shaped me, an important step on the theological journey, first time I saw doctrine articulated on the page, it was the systematic theology that I was trying to pick up, may have not been the function it was intended for, it was a systematic reflecting on something, I was on that journey, more than just theology, there was something that never departed from the core, and that's the core, I do share my faith, this process artificial, artificiality of it, my whole up bringing in the evangelical tradition, that it was me on my own, it was seminal, the first theological writing I had, part of the little theological library that was emerging,

Categories:

Journey Into Life was in the family home and at Crusader camp where King remembers reading the booklet and it making sense. Having always been a Christian and having always prayed he found himself resisting the whole thing, pushing towards a decision in an evangelical act of faith because he felt that he was already a Christian. He did however see it as an important step in his theological journey as *Journey Into Life* became part of his early theological paraphernalia, providing him with a systematic theology and an introduction to thinking theologically. Although he found this means of faith sharing artificial he felt it provided him with the core that he has never departed from, even as a theologically literate academic.

Narrative Nine – Clements: 'It still remains an important part of me'.

Codes:

Brother, gave me a copy of Journey Into Life, this is what you need to do, I thought I did believe it, Journey Into Life provided me with a kind of tool, simple, a good distillation of the Gospel, just clear, uncluttered, intelligible, I held onto it for a little while, before I actually did it, I didn't want to just do it, sealing a deal that I thought I had already sealed, I understood what I was doing, making myself right with God, very low key private, in the privacy of my own bedroom, reading that, kneeling down by the side of my bed, praying the prayer, I was admitting I was a Christian, things started to happen in my life, I've done it, felt calmness, 18th January 1981, I remember telling a friend, then I said what I'd done, pre-theoretical evangelism, just like sharing news, triggered off something, conversion came at a really good moment, the right moment for me, didn't realise how dynamite that was to pray that prayer, like a car bomb underneath me, still remains an important part of me, a sense in which that remains for me, that is always in the heart, it would work for some, rooted in a very linear, logical and rational approach, a modern understanding, I understood the language, I understood what was going on here, I am eternally grateful for the stuff that's in here.

Categories:

Journey into Life was given to Clements by his brother who had been converted at Cambridge University through the Navigators evangelistic organisation. He told Clements that even though he had a basic grounding in the gospel though

Sunday school and a Methodist home, he had to do something about this by making a profession of faith. *Journey Into Life* provided the simple tool as a good distillation of the Gospel that was clear, uncluttered and intelligible. He understood the language and the booklets linear, logical, rational and modern approach made sense. Having held onto it for a while he sealed the deal by praying the prayer although he was confused because he thought he had already sealed it through his Christian upbringing. Clements felt calmness and experienced an extraordinary powerful sense of a deep sense of conviction of the presence of God in his bedroom with the result that one of his friends also made a commitment of faith. Clements was eternally grateful for *Journey Into Life* and he felt that it was an important part of him and one that is always in the heart.

Narrative Ten – Dench: ‘a catalyst in my faith decision’.

Codes:

Sunday school, in the same camp, Christianity in the background, it wasn't in our tradition, youth club, boys brigade, gave us, baptism preparation, questions, answer, sat down and read it, cover to cover, worked my way through it, all made sense, not a visual person, I like words, articulated in my own head, clarity, black and white, this crystalised it for me, catalyst, critical, to make a decision, that's the critical thing, the only thing I remember is the prayer, frightened, afraid, of change, prayed the prayer, the pivotal thing, in the exact words, powerful, no going back, felt warmth flowing through me, peace, a spiritual thing, warmth washed over me, told people, gave two copies away, it really does contain in a nutshell, the evangelical perspective, it transformed my life, it could work today, I have a fondness for it, it resonates – still does.'

Categories:

Dench was given *Journey Into Life* by the vicar during a baptism visit. His previous exposure to an evangelical Sunday school and church youth club meant that when he read it the booklet made sense, gave him clarity, acting as a catalyst crystalising and containing in a nutshell the evangelical perspective that brought him to a point of decision. He was frightened about praying the prayer, recognising it as the pivotal point and knowing that it would involve a life-

changing commitment and no going back. Not being a visual person it was the words that made the biggest impression and he used the exact words of the prayer in the booklet to make his decision. This was followed by a powerful spiritual experience of warmth washing over and through him bringing a deep sense of peace. Dench said that it transformed his life, resulting in a fondness for Journey Into Life originally expressed in the act of giving copies to others. He thought that particularly amongst black and white thinkers it could work today, feeling that it still resonates.

Narrative Eleven – Herne: ‘simple and easy to understand’.

Codes:

Road signs, took the booklet away, very clear, simple, bold, easy to understand, very obvious, made sense, familiar symbols, carries a whole load of meaning, carried a message, look at, you know the meaning, on my own, reading the booklet, clarified my understanding of the gospel, theological framework, how Jesus could save me, warming to Jesus, a process, very much a journey, the right road, took time, prayed the prayer, spiritual enlightening, the booklet was around, remember seeing it, used to hand out, kept it, it's the gospel.

Categories:

Herne took the road signs booklet and reading it on her own found the booklet to be clear, simple, bold and easy to understand. The familiar symbols made sense with an initial decision and prayer being followed by a nine-month spiritual journey of enlightenment, a process of warming to Jesus, clarifying her understanding and developing a theological framework. Herne did it by the book following the booklet's instructions and clearly remembers Journey Into Life being around and being handed out in the early 1980s.

Narrative Twelve – Brown: ‘It's all utter bollocks’.

Codes:

Nominally Christian, local church, Sunday school, Christian Union meetings, makes no sense to me, booklets thrust at me, thrust little leaflets into my hand, I do remember these leaflets, the one with the little road sign on the front, this is easy, read this stuff, understand it, it's all

sorted, all I needed to do was repent and it would all be fine, took the little leaflet and ripped it up, chucked it on the ground, really offensive, same sort of stuff from Christians on Campus, all utter bollocks, really painful, read this bilge, could virtually recite what they were going to say, it's all my fault, because I was sinful, I was intrinsically bad, majored on sin very heavily, how bad I'd been, I needed to pray for forgiveness, Jesus had died for me, he loved me personally, it's all sorted 'cos Jesus loves you right, all I had to do was believe, and my life would be lovely, but my life still feels crap, fragmented, needed somebody to mediate it for me, I disliked all those little leaflets, makes me angry, defensive and angry, I genuinely worry about the content of some of that stuff, I think it's a bit naïve, a potted digest of how to get faith, written in a dialect I don't understand, made that journey by another route, it was quite literally taken out of my hands, I tend to start from where people are, just say well there might be a better way.

Categories:

Brown was given *Journey into life* with the road signs on the front in her early teens whilst resident at a special school for young people with Cerebral Palsy [herein after CP]. The leaflets were thrust into her hand at Christian Union meetings at school and later at the university Campus Christian Union. Brown read this stuff to the point where she could virtually recite what they were going to say but found its so called easy message really painful, really offensive bilge in its suggestion that all she needed to do was to repent and all would be fine. Brown read *Journey Into Life* as saying that she was intrinsically bad and sinful and that her CP was all her own fault and the result of her sin. She understood that she needed to pray for forgiveness and that Jesus died for her, that he loved her personally and that if she did this all would be sorted because Jesus loves you right? The little leaflets made her angry, her life still felt like crap and having concluded that it was all utter bollocks she took the little leaflet, ripped it up and chucked it on the ground. Brown thought that *Journey Into Life* was a bit naïve, a potted digest of how to get faith and she genuinely worries about the content of some of that stuff. Recognising that *Journey Into Life* was written in a dialect she didn't understand she made her *journey into life* by another route, via an approach that starts from where people are and suggests to them that there might be a better way.

Information Sheet and Consent Form

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

REC Reference Number: REP (EM) 11/12-71

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Journey into life.' A theological, cultural and historical case study into Norman Warren's world famous tract called 'journey into life.'

We would like to invite you to participate in this postgraduate research project. You should only participate if you want to. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

The aim of this research is to find out how the booklet 'journey into life' has affected the lives of the people who have used it. Through the analysis of people's stories I am seeking to gain a better understanding of how people come to faith and the place of 'journey into life' in this process. I am recruiting anyone who has a story to tell about how this booklet has impacted their life?

If you agree to participate in the study you will be asked for an interview. The interview will be asking for your story as it relates to your experience of reading this book.

The interviews will be recorded and then transcribed by the researcher in order to facilitate further study.

Your interview recordings, transcripts, archive material and your personal details will be securely stored. All electronic data will be stored using encryption techniques. All research data that you provide will be kept for one year from the conclusion of the study. Archive data will be returned to you at the end of the study. All research data that you provide will be kept for one year from the conclusion of the study and then destroyed with the exception of the author interviews which will be archived for the purposes of further research.

We are hoping that this research will yield valuable new insights into the process of evangelism and faith sharing that will not only be of historical interest but will also be applicable to this task today. As a participant you will be offered the opportunity to view the completed research project.

To ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 all participants will be informed of what information is being held. This will be contact details, the story you provide and any further correspondence with you relating to this process.

My name is Reverend Christopher Noble and I can be contacted at christopher.noble@kcl.ac.uk or at The Department of Education and Professional Studies, Room 1/1 Waterloo Bridge Wing, King's College London, London, SE1 9NH

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not. You may withdraw yourself from this study, If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving

a reason. You may also withdraw any data/information you have already provided up until it is used in the final report on 31st August 2016. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

If this study has harmed you in any way you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information: Project Supervisor: Professor Pete Ward. Email peter.ward@kcl.ac.uk Department of Professional Studies, Waterloo Bridge Wing, Kings College London, London, SE1 9NH.

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.

Title of Study: _____

King's College Research Ethics Committee Ref: _____

Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

- **I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to the point of publication on August 31st 2016.**
- **I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.**

I consent to my interview being recorded.

Participant's Statement:

I _____

agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written

above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed

Date

DELETE IF NOT APPROPRIATE

Investigator's Statement:

I _____

Confirm that I have carefully explained the nature, demands and any foreseeable risks (where applicable) of the proposed research to the participant.

Signed

Date

Bibliography

- Ackerley, Glyn J., *Importing Faith: The Effect of American "Word of Faith" Culture on Contemporary English Revivalism* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2015).
- Agar, Mike, *The Professional Stranger* (New York: New York Academic Press, 1980).
- Allen, Roland, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 1927, 2006).
- Ammerman, Nancy T., *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
- Ashton, Mark, *Christian Youth Work* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1986).
- Astley, Jeff, *Ordinary Theology: Looking, Listening and Learning in Theology, Explorations in Practical, Pastoral and Empirical Theology* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002).
- Atherstone, Andrew, *Archbishop Justin Welby: Risk-Taker and Reconciler* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, 2014).
- Bailey, David, 'Relationships as Communicative Acts in Youth Ministry and Trinitarian Theology' (Kings College London, 2013).
- Ballard, Paul and John Pritchard, *Practical Theology in Action* (London: SCM, 1996).
- Barclay, John M.G., *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015).
- , *Paul and the Subversive Power of Grace* (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2016).
- Barclay, Oliver R., *Evangelicalism in Britain 1935-1995* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1997).
- , *Whatever Happened to the Jesus Lane Lot?* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977).
- Barth, Karl, *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1963).
- Barthes, Roland, *Mythologies* (London: Paladin, 1973).

- Baudrillard J., *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (St Louis: Telos Press, 1981).
- Baughan, Michael A., ed., *Psalm Praise* (London: Falcon Books, 1973).
- , ed., *Youth Praise: A New Collection of Christian Hymns, Songs, Choruses and Spirituals*. (London: Falcon Books, 1966).
- , ed., *Youth Praise* (London: Falcon Books, 1969).
- Bauman, Zigmunt, *Community Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).
- , *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).
- , *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).
- Bebbington, David W., *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Abingdon: Unwin Hyman, 1989).
- Bell, Rob, *Love Wins* (London: Collins, 2011).
- Berger, Peter L. and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Penguin Books, 1966).
- Berkhof, Louis, *Systematic Theology*. 1971 edn (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1932).
- Best, Gary, *Naturally Supernatural: Joining God in His Work* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing 2005).
- Bevens, Stephen B., *Models of Contextual Theology*. Revised and Expanded Edition edn, *Faith and Cultures* (New York: Orbis Books, 1992).
- Bickley, Paul, *The Problem of Proselytism* (London: Theos, 2015).
- Boisen, Anton T., *The Exploration of the Inner World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971).
- Booker, Mike and Mark Ireland, *Evangelism - Which Way Now? An Evaluation of Alpha, Emmaus, Cell Church and Other Contemporary Strategies for Evangelism*. Second edn (London: Church House Publishing, 2005).
- Bosch, David J., *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2008).
- Bourdieu, Pierre, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

- 'Bridge to Life', ed. by The Navigators Great Britain (New Malden: Navpress, 1985).
- Briggs, Charles L., *Learning How to Ask: A Sociolinguistic Appraisal of the Role of the Interview in Social Science Research* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- Bright, Bill, 'Four Spiritual Laws', (Orlando: Campus Crusade For Christ, 1965).
- Brown, Callum G., *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularization 1800-2000* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2001).
- Brown, Carolyn, 'Journey Into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. By Christopher Noble (2015).
- Browning, Don.S., *Practical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983).
- Bruce, Steve, *God Is Dead: Secularization in the West, Religion in the Modern World* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002).
- Bruchac, Margaret, *Consorting with Savages: Indigenous Informants and American Anthropologists*, University of Pennsylvania, (2014) [Accessed 13/12/2017].
- Butler, Christopher, *Postmodernism, A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- Butler, Judith, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1990).
- Cameron, Helen, Deborah Bhatti, Catherine Duce, James Sweeney, and Clare Watkins, *Talking About God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2010).
- Carson, D. A., *Becoming Conversant With The Emerging Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005).
- Cartledge, Mark J., *Testimony in the Spirit: Rescripting Ordinary Pentecostal Theology* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010).
- Carwardine, Richard, *Transatlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America 1790-1865* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 1978).
- Chalke, Steve, and Alan Mann, *The Lost Message of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).

- Chamberlayne, Prue , Joanna Bornat, and Tom Wengraf, eds., *The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science: Comparative Issues and Examples* (London: Routledge, 2000).
- Chapman, Alister, *Godly Ambition: John Stott and the Evangelical Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- , 'Secularization and the Ministry of John Stott at All Souls Langham Place, in 1950-1970', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 56 (2005), 496-513.
- Chapman, John C., *Know and Tell the Gospel: The Why and How of Evangelism* (Sydney: Hodder and Stoughton, 1981).
- , *Setting Hearts on Fire: A Guide to Giving Evangelistic Talks* (Kingsford: Matthias Media, 1999).
- Charmaz, Kathy, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis* (London: Sage, 2006).
- Chester, Carrie, 'Journey Into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).
- Chevreau, Guy, *Catch the Fire: The Toronto Blessing* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1994).
- Chick, Jack.T., 'Your Best Life', (Ontario California: Chick Publications, 2014).
- Christie, Ann, *Ordinary Christology* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012).
- Clarke, Michael, *Verbalising the Visual: Translating Art and Design into Words* (Lausanne: AVA Publishing, 2007).
- Clements, Peter, 'Journey Into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).
- Corbin, J. and A. Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research - Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2008).
- Cottrell, Stephen, Steven Croft, John Finney, Felicity Lawson, and Robert Warren, *Emmaus the Way of Faith*. Second edn (London: Church House Publishing, 2003).
- Cray, Graham, and others, *Mission-Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context*. trans. A working group of

- the Church of England's Mission and Public Affairs Council (London: Church House Publishing, 2004).
- — —, and others, *New Monasticism as Fresh Expression of Church* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2010).
- Davie, Grace, *Religion in Britain since 1945* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1994).
- — —, *Religion in Britain: A Persistent Paradox*. 2nd edn (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015).
- Davies, Andrew, Heather Buckingham, and Mark Cartledge, 'Megachurches and Social Engagement in London'
<<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/.../projects/megachurches/index.aspx>>2017].
- Day Abby, *Believing in Belonging: Belief and Social Identity in the Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- Dean, Kenda Creasy, *Practicing Passion: Youth and the Quest for a Passionate Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2004).
- Dedmon, Kevin, *The Ultimate Treasure Hunt: A Guide to Supernatural Evangelism through Supernatural Encounters* (Shippensburg: Destiny Image, 2007).
- Dench, Adam, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).
- Denscombe, Martyn, *The Good Research Guide for Small-Scale Social Research Projects* (Maidenhead: Oxford University Press, 2007).
- Dickson, John, *Promoting the Gospel: The Whole of Life for the Cause of Christ* (Sydney: Aquila Press, 2005).
- Dodd, Charles Harold, *The Bible and the Greeks* (London: Hodder, 1935).
- Donovan, Vincent J., *Christianity Rediscovered* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1978).
- Doyle, Robert, *Signs and Wonders and Evangelicals: A Response to the Teaching of John Wimber* (Randburg: Fabel 1987).
- Drain, John, *The Mcdonaldization of the Church* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2000).
- Du Gay, Paul, et al., *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman* (London: Sage Publications, 1997).

- Duffy, Eamon, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001).
- Dulles, Avery Cardinal, *Models of the Church* (New York: Image Books, 1978).
- Eddison, John, *Bash: A Study in Spiritual Power* (Basingstoke: Marshalls, 1993).
- Edwards, David L., *Christian England* (London: William Collins, 1989).
- Ellul, Jacques, *The New Demons*. trans. C. Edward Hopkins (New York: A Crossroad Book - The Seabury Press, 1973).
- Fiddes, Paul S., *Past Event and Present Salvation: The Christian Idea of Atonement* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1989).
- Fish, Stanley, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretative Communities* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1980).
- Fiske, John, *Introduction To Communication Studies* (London: Routledge, 1982).
- Ford, David, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).
- Ford, David F., *Theology: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).
- Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel, Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2013).
- Frykholm, Amy Johnson, *Rapture Culture: Left Behind in Evangelical America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg, *Truth and Method*. trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London: Bloomsbury, 1975).
- Galli, Mark, 'Rob Bell's Bridge Too Far', Christianity Today, (2011) [Accessed 3/4/2017 2017].
- Geertz, Clifford, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).
- Gilbert, Alan D., *The Making of Post-Christian Britain: A history of the secularization of modern society* (London: Longman, 1980).
- Gillham, Bill, *The Research Interview* (London: Continuum, 2000).
- Gillian, Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Methods* (London: Sage, 2001).

- Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Transaction, 1967).
- Good News for Modern Man: The New Testament in Today's English Version*, (Fontana Religious, 1966).
- Graham, Billy, 'Steps to Peace with God', (Charlotte: The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, 1953).
- Graham, Elaine, *Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1996).
- Green, Laurie, *Lets Do Theology: Resources for Contextual Theology* (London: Continuum, 2009).
- Green, Michael, *Evangelism Through The Local Church* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990).
- Griffiths, Michael, *Take My Life* (Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1967).
- Grubb, Norman, *C.T.Studd: Cricketer and Pioneer* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1970).
- Grudem, Wayne, *Systematic Theology* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994).
- Grudem, Wayne, *The Gift of Prophecy Today* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1988).
- Guest, Matthew, *Evangelical Identity and Contemporary Culture: A Congregational Study in Innovation* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007).
- Guldseth, Mark O., *Streams: The Flow of Inspiration from Dwight Moody to Frank Buchman* (Homer: Fritz Creek Studios, 1982).
- Gumbel, Nicky, *Questions of Life: A Practical Introduction to the Christian Faith* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications Limited, 1993).
- , *Why Jesus?* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications Ltd, 1991).
- Gunton, Colin E., *The Actuality of Atonement: A study of Metaphor, Rationality and The Christian Tradition* (London: T & T Clarke, 1988).
- Haraway, Donna, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective ', *Feminist Studies*, 4 (1988), 575-99.
- Hauerwas, Stanley, and L. Gregory Jones, *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1989).

- Healy, Nicholas M., *Church, World and the Christian Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Heard, James, *Inside Alpha: Explorations in Evangelism, Studies in Evangelical History and Thought* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2009).
- Hebdige, Dick, *Subculture the Meaning of Style* (London: Routledge, 1979).
- Heelas, Paul and Linda Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion Is Giving Way to Spirituality* (New Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005).
- Heitink, Gerben, *Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993).
- Hendershot, Heather, *Shaking the World for Jesus: Media and Conservative Evangelical Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
- Hendry, Joy, *Wrapping Culture: Politeness, Presentation and Power in Japan and Other Societies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
- , *An Introduction to Social Anthropology: Sharing our Worlds* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
- Herkes, Richard, 'Publisher Interview', ed. by Christopher Noble (2012).
- Herne, Anne, 'Journey into Life Research Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).
- Hesmondhaigh, David, *The Cultural Industries*. 3rd edn (London: Sage, 2013).
- Hill, Charles E. and Frank A. James, eds., *The Glory of the Atonement* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004).
- Hooker, Morna and Francis Young, *Holiness and Mission: Learning from the Early Church about Mission in the City* (London: SCM Press, 2010).
- Hole, Robert, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order in England 1760-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
- Holman-Hunt, William, 'The Light of the World', (1853).
- Hopewell, James F., *Congregation: Stories and Structures* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).
- Horrocks, Chris and Zoran Jevtic, *Introducing Baudrillard* (Cambridge: Icon Books, 1999).
- Hurst, Dave, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2014).

- Iphofen, Ron, *Ethical Decision-Making in Social Research* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).
- James, William, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Renaissance Classic, 2012).
- Jeffery, Steve, Mike Ovey and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions: Rediscovering the Glory of Penal Substitution* (Nottingham: Inter -Varsity Press, 2007).
- Jensen, Phillip 'Two Ways to Live', (Sydney: St Matthias Press, 1989).
- Jenkins, Michael, *The Church Faces Death: Ecclesiology in a Post-Modern Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).
- John, J., *Making the Connection: Discovering a Relationship with God* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2009).
- , *More Ways Than One: Evangelism in the Post Modern World* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2009).
- , *The Natural Evangelism Course* (Chorleywood: Philo Trust, 2014).
- Johnston, Douglas, *Contending For The Faith: A History of the Evangelical Movement in the Universities and Colleges* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1979).
- Keats, Daphne M., *Interviewing: A Practical Guide for Students and Professionals* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001).
- Kelly, Dean M., *Why conservative Churches are growing: A Study in Sociology of Religion* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1986)
- Kennedy, D. James, *Evangelism Explosion* (London: Coverdale House Publications, 1970).
- Kerr, Carol, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).
- King, Andrew, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).
- 'Knowing God Personally', ed. by Campus Crusade for Christ (Orlando: Campus Crusade for Christ 1985).
- Kraft, Charles H., *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979).

- Krogerus, Mikael and Roman Tschappeler, *The Decision Book: Fifty Models for Strategic Thinking* (London: Profile Books, 2011).
- Kvale, Steiner and Svend Brinkmann, *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing* (London: Sage, 2009).
- Ladd, George Eldon, *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974).
- Larsen, Timothy and Daniel J. Treier, *Evangelical Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
- Lean, Gart, *Cast out Your Nets: Sharing Your Faith with Others* (London: Grosvenor, 1990).
- , *Frank Buchman: A Life* (London: Collins, 1985).
- , *Good God, It Works!* (Poole: Blandford Press, 1974).
- Levi-Strauss, Claude, *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss* (London: Routledge, 1950).
- Lincoln, Y.S and E.G. Guba, *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2000).
- , *Naturalistic Enquiry* (London: Sage, 1985).
- Little, Paul, *Know What and Why You Believe* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1970).
- Lloyd-Jones D.M., *Evangelistic Sermons at Aberavon* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1983).
- Loder, James E, *The Logic of the Spirit*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998).
- Lossky, Vladimir, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Cambridge: James Clarke 2005).
- , *Orthodox Theology: An Introduction* (Crestwood, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1978).
- Luhrmann, T. M., *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God*. (New York: Vintage Books, 2012).
- Lynch, Gordon, *Between Sacred and Profane: Researching Religion and Popular Culture*. ed. by Gordon Lynch (London: I.B.Tauris, 2007).

- , *Understanding Theology and Popular Culture*. ed. by Gordon Lynch (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).
- Male, David and Paul Weston, *The Word's Out: Speaking The Gospel Today* (Abingdon: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2013).
- Malinowski, Bronislaw, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1922).
- Manley-Pippert, Rebecca, *Out of the Saltshaker: Evangelism as a Way of Life* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1979).
- Markus, Robert A., *Christianity and the Secular* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 2006).
- Marshall, Colin, and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Monday Shift That Changes Everything* (Kingsford: Matthias Media, 2009).
- Mason, Jennifer, *Qualitative Researching* (London: Sage, 2002).
- Mauss, Marcel, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. trans. Ian Cunnison (Connecticut: Martino Publishing, 2011).
- May, Stuart, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2015).
- Mazur, Michael and Kate McCarthy, *God in the Details: American Religion in Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2001).
- McClatchey, Caroline, 'The Road Sign as Design Classic', BBC News, (2011) <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/mobile/magazine-15990443>> [Accessed 16.3.2017 2017].
- McDannell, Colleen, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1995).
- McGrath, Alister, *Beyond The Quiet Time: Practical Evangelical Spirituality* (London: Triangle, 1995).
- , *Christianity's Dangerous Idea: The Protestant Revolution* (London: SPCK, 2007).
- , *The Cultivation of a Theological Vision*. ed. by Pete Ward, *Perspectives on Ecclesiology and Ethnography* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012).

- , *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1994).
- , *The Enigma of the Cross* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1987).
- , *The J.I. Packer Collection* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999).
- McLaren, Brian D., *A New Kind of Christianity* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2004).
- Mc Loughlin, William, G., *Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004).
- Merrill, Barbara and Linden West, *Using Biographical Methods in Social Science Research* (London: Sage, 2009).
- Millbank, John, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006)
- , 'Can a Gift Be Given? Prolegomena to a Future Trinitarian Metaphysic', *Modern Theology*, 11 (1995), 119-61.
- Miller, Daniel, *Stuff* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010).
- Moltmann, Jurgen, *The Crucified God* (London: SCM Classics, 1974).
- Monaghan, John, and Peter Just, *Social and Cultural Antropology: A very Short introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- Moore, Laurence R., *Selling God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
- Moore, Lucy, *Messy Church: Fresh Ideas for Building a Christ-Centred Community* (Abingdon: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2006).
- Morgan, David, *Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief*. ed. by David Morgan (London: Routledge, 2010).
- , *The Lure of Images: A history of religion and visual media in America*. ed. by Stewart M. Hoover, Jolyon Mitchell and David Morgan (New York: Routledge, 2007).
- , Mediation or mediatisation: The history of media in the study of religion, *Culture and Religion: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 12:02 (2011), 137-152.
- , *Protestants and Pictures: Religion, Visual Culture, and the Age of American Mass Production* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

- , *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
- Morphew, Derek, *Breakthrough: Discovering The Kingdom* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishers, 1991).
- Muggeridge, Malcolm, *The Thirties: 1930-1940 in Great Britain* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1940).
- Nash, E.J.H., 'Life at Its Best', (London: Scripture Union, 1964).
- Nathan, Rich, and Ken Wilson, *Empowered Evangelicals: Bringing Together the Best of the Evangelical and Charismatic Worlds* (Ann Arbor: Vine Books, 1995).
- Noll, Mark A., *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2004).
- , *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, (Grand Rapids: Wm.B.Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1994).
- Orsi, Robert A., *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).
- Osmer, Richard Robert, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2008).
- Packer J.I., *'Fundamentalism' and the Word of God* (London: Inter-varsity Fellowship, 1958).
- , *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (London: Inter-varsity Fellowship, 1961).
- , *Freedom, Authority & Scripture* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981).
- , *God Has Spoken* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1979).
- , *Gods Words* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981).
- , *I Want to be a Christian* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1977).
- , *Keep In Step With The Spirit* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984).
- , *Knowing God* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1973).
- , *Under God's Word* (London: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1980).
- Pattison, Stephen, *Seeing Things: Deepening Relations with Visual Artefacts* (London: SCM, 2007).

- Percy, Martyn, *Clergy: The Origin of Species* (London: Continuum, 2006).
- , *Power and The Church: Ecclesiology in an Age of Transition* (London: Cassell, 1998).
- Phillips, Peter and others, *Digital Communication, the Church and Mission* (Durham: CODEC Church Growth Resourcing Mission Bulletin, 2013).
- Pickering, Michael, ed., *Research Methods in Cultural Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008).
- Pollock, John, *Billy Graham: The Authorised Biography* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1966).
- , *George Whitefield and the Great Awakening* (Tring: Lion Publishing, 1972).
- Prown, Jules David, 'Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method', *Winterthur Portfolio*, 17 (1982), 1-2.
- Putnam, Hilary, *Reason, Truth and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
- Raimes, Jonathan and Lakshmi Bhaskaran, *Retro Graphics: A Visual Sourcebook to 100 years of Graphic Design* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2007).
- Randall, Ian, *Educating Evangelicalism* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000).
- Rambo, Lewis R., *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).
- Reddie, Anthony, 'People Matter Too! The Politics and Method of Doing Black Liberation Theology', *Practical Theology*, 1.1 (2008), 43-63.
- Reeves, Tom, *Managing Effectively: Developing Yourself through Experience* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann Limited, 1994).
- Kohler Riessman, Catherine, *Narrative Analysis: Qualitative Research Methods*. Vol. 30 (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1993).
- Ritzer, George, *The Mcdonaldization of Society*. Revised New Century Edition edn (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2004).
- Robinson, John, *Honest to God* (London: SCM, 1963).
- Rohr, Richard, 'Grieving as Sacred Space', in *John Mark Ministries: Thinking Maturely About The Christian Faith* (2003).

- Rojek, Chris, *Brit-Myth: Who Do The British Think They Are?* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007).
- , *Cultural Studies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).
- Rorty, Richard, *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- Rose, Gillian, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Methods* (London: Sage, 2001).
- Rosenblatt, Louise M., 'The Aesthetic Transaction', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 20 (1986), 122-28.
- Rubin, Herbert J. and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995).
- Ryle, J.C., *Christian Leaders of the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1885).
- Sanneh, Lamin, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997).
- Saward, Michael, *Evangelicals on the Move* (London: Mobray, 1987).
- Scharen, Christian, and Aana Marie Vigen, eds., *Ethnography as Christian Theology and Ethics* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011), pp. xvii-xxvii.
- Schofield, Cyrus I., *The Schofield Reference Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1917).
- Schreier, Robert J., *Constructing Local Theologies* (London: SCM Press, 1985).
- Scribner R.W., *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1987)
- Dudley-Smith, Timothy,
- , *Falcoln Books, Booklets and Leaflets* (London: Church Pastoral Aid Society, 1965).
- , *John Stott: A Global Ministry* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001).
- Stibbe, Mark, *Prophetic Evangelism: When God Speaks to Those Who Don't Know Him* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2004).
- Stott, John R.W., 'Becoming a Christian', (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1950).
- , *Basic Christianity*, (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1958).

- , *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, (London: Falcon Books, 1975).
- , *Guard The Gospel*, (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973).
- , *Only One Way*, (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968).
- , *The Authentic Jesus*, (Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1985).
- , *The Cross of Christ*, (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986).
- Strenski, Ivan, *Malinowski and the Work of Myth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).
- Strhan, Anna, *Aliens and Strangers?: The Struggle for Coherence in the Everyday Lives of Evangelicals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).
- Swinton, John *Where Is Your Church? Moving Towards a Hospitable and Sanctified Ethnography*. ed. by Pete Ward, *Perspectives on Ecclesiology and Ethnography* (Cambridge: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012).
- Swinton, John and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM Press, 2006).
- Sykes, Stephen, *The Identity of Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1984).
- Tamney, Joseph B., *The Resilience of Conservative Religion: The Case of Popular Conservative Protestant Congregations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- Taylor, Charles, *What Is Secularism?* ed by Geoffrey Braham Levey and Tariq Modood, *Secularism, Religion and Multicultural Citizenship* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2009), p. xv.
- Taylor, Howard, *Biography of James Hudson Taylor* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965).
- Thumma, Scott and Dave Travis, *Beyond Megachurch Myths* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007).
- Tice, Rico and Barry Cooper, *Christianity Explored* (New Malden: The Good Book Company, 2002).
- Tidball, Derek and David Hilborn, eds., *The Atonement Debate: Papers from the London Symposium on the Theology of Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007).

- Tomlin, Graham, *The Provocative Church* (London: SPCK, 2002).
- Trammel, Madison, 'Cross Purposes', *Christianity Today*, (2007) [Accessed 5/4/2017 2017].
- Turnbull, Richard, *Anglican and Evangelical?* (London: continuum, 2007).
- Turner, Graeme, *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1990).
- Walker, Andrew, *Restoring the Kingdom: The Radical Christianity of the House Church Movement* (Guilford: Eagle Publishing, 1998).
- , *Telling the Story: Gospel, Mission and Culture* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1996).
- Walker, Andrew and Luke Bretherton, eds., *Remembering our Future: Explorations in Deep Church* (London: Paternoster, 2007).
- Walls, Andrew F., *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996).
- Ward, Pete, "Alpha: 'The Mcdonaldization of Religion?'," *Anvil*, 15 (1998), 279-86.
- , *Growing up Evangelical* (London: SPCK, 1996).
- , *Liquid Church* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002).
- , *Liquid Ecclesiology: The Gospel and the Church* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).
- , *Participation and Mediation: A Practical Theology for the Liquid Church* (London: SCM Press, 2008).
- , *Selling Worship: How What We Sing Has Changed the Church* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2005).
- , 'Union with Christ: The Subplot of Evangelical Soteriology', *Journal of Youth and Theology*, 2 (2003), 84-99.
- Ward, Pete, *The Authoritative Guide to Plastic Collectables* (Leicester: Silverdale Books, 2001).
- Warner, Rob, *Reinventing English Evangelicalism, 1966-2001: A Theological and Sociological Study, Studies in Evangelical History and Thought* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007).
- Warner, Stephen R., *New Wine in Old Wineskins: Evangelical and Liberals in a Small-Town Church* (Berkley, University of California Press, 1988).

- Warren, Norman, 'Author Interview', ed. by Christopher Noble (2011).
- , 'Directions: Fourteen Bible Study Outlines on Basic Christianity', (London: Falcon Booklets, 1969).
- , *Journey into Life*. 4th edn (Colorado Springs: David C Cook).
- , *On Your Marks: The Gospel of Mark Followed by Journey into Life*. ed. by Trevour Hames (South Croydon: Deo Gloria Resources, 2009).
- , *Signposts: Preparing a Church for Evangelism* (London: The Church Pastoral Aid Society, 1974).
- , 'The Way Ahead: A Practical Guide to Christian Living', (London: Falcon Booklets, 1966).
- , 'Writing the Good News', (The College of Evangelists).
- Norman L. Warren, *Journey into Life: A Pictorial Guide to the Christian Life*. ed. by Published for the Church Pastoral-Aid Society (London: Falcon Booklets, 1963).
- Warren, Rick, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995).
- , *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).
- Watson, David, *I Believe in Evangelism* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976).
- Weiner, Annette B., *Inalienable Possessions: The Paradox of Keeping While Giving* (Berkeley: California Press, 1992).
- Wells, Hugo, 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2012).
- Wengraf, Tom, *Qualitative Research Interviewing: Biographic Narrative and Semi-Structured Methods* (London: Sage, 2001).
- Whiffin, Trevor 'Professional Printer Interview', ed. by Christopher Noble (2016).
- Wimber, John and Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism: Signs and Wonders Today* (London: Hodder and Stoughton 1985).
- Williams, Paul, *Intentional: Evangelism That Takes People to Jesus* (London: Ten Publishing, 2016).
- Willis, Paul, *Learning To Labour: How Working Class Kids Get working Class Jobs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).
- Wood, James 'Journey into Life Participant Interview Transcript', ed. by Christopher Noble (2014).

Wood, Maurice A.P., 'How Can I Find God?', (London: Islington Booklets, 1954).

Woodward, Ian, *Understanding Material Culture* (Los Angeles, Sage Publications, 2007).

Woodward, James and Stephen Pattison, eds., *Pastoral and Practical Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

Wright, Chris *et al*, *John Stott Pastor, Leader and Friend* (Peabody: The Lausanne Movement, 2012).

Yin, Robert K., *Case Study Research Design and Methods*. 5th edn (Los Angeles: Sage, 2014).

Young, Michael W., *Ethnography of Malinowski: The Trobriand Islands 1915-1918* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979).